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Daily Advocate: Guest column from Rep. Keith Faber: Old Glory withstands the changes of time

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Richland Source: Guest column from Rep. Mark Romanchuk: Remembering the significance of the flag

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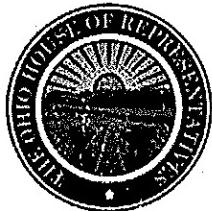
From: Miller, Brad
Sent: Monday, June 19, 2017 4:05 PM
To: Adams, Alexandra; Slack, Cora; Best, Carolyn; Westlake, Libby; Cho, Joy
Subject: RE: UPDATED Week in Review

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Add Dayton Daily News. Then looks good to me.

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To: Slack, Cora <Cora.Slack@ohiohouse.gov>; Best, Carolyn <Carolyn.Best@ohiohouse.gov>; Westlake, Libby <Libby.Westlake@ohiohouse.gov>; Miller, Brad <Brad.Miller@ohiohouse.gov>; Cho, Joy <Joy.Cho@ohiohouse.gov>
Subject: UPDATED Week in Review



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Majority Communications Department

GOP Week in Review

6/12/17 – 6/18/17

Columbus Dispatch: The Daily Briefing: Ohio Senate president talks insurance mandates at White House

He was joined by Sen. Steve Wilson, R-Maineville, Rep. Mark Romanchuk, R-Mansfield, and Rea Hederman Jr. of the Buckeye Institute.

Cincinnati Business Courier: Ohio dogs soon may get their day on restaurant patios

"I'm a huge animal advocate. There's a number of other states and municipalities that allow it. It's all over Europe," Lanese told me on Tuesday. "Why not allow restaurants to make the decision for themselves? They know their customers best."

Columbus Underground: New bill would allow dogs on restaurant patios

"This legislation gives businesses the freedom to decide for themselves whether or not to allow dogs on their patios," said State Representative Laura Lanese (R-Grove City), who sponsored the bill. "It is also a recognition of the importance of animals in our lives. We already have pet-friendly hotels, pet-friendly parks, and pet-friendly events. It's a good opportunity for marketing our state as pet-friendly for tourism purposes as many travelers want to bring their pets along with them while they travel."

WSYX: Lawmakers looking to allow dogs to dine at restaurants

The sponsor of the bill, Rep. Laura Lanese (R - Grove City) said she started working on the bill after hearing from several restaurant owners who had only recently learned they couldn't have dogs on the patio. She said she understands some people won't want to eat with dogs around.

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Subject: GOP Week in Review 6/12/17 – 6/18/17



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GOP Week in Review

6/12/17 – 6/18/17

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From: The Buckeye Institute
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 20, 2017

The Buckeye Institute's Greg Lawson Calls for Greater Education Choice and Opportunities for Ohio's Families

Lawson Testifies Before the Ohio House Education and Career Readiness Committee

Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute's Greg R. Lawson testified today before the Ohio House Education and Career Readiness Committee on Opportunity Scholarship program and education savings accounts that are contained in House Bill 200. In his testimony (see full testimony below), Lawson, who is a research fellow at The Buckeye Institute and a leader in the Ohio school choice movement, urged Ohio to give greater education options and opportunities to families.

"Despite the exceptional resources devoted to schools and education over the last few decades, we have yet to see academic gains commensurate with those investments. At least one reason we seem unable to reap significant gains lies in our failure to adapt to the changing realities of our new century," said Lawson. "Our education model remains stuck

in the post-Industrial Age of 20th century mass production while our children-the supposed beneficiaries of that model-live and think in the increasingly made-to-order 21st."

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Citing a recent report he co-authored on **education savings accounts** (ESA), Lawson highlighted the benefits of ESAs and the success they have seen in other states. "ESAs give families the purchasing power to create a customized education for their children, empowering them to order from an à la carte menu of education services, instead of suffering the one-size-fits-all model of education currently provided by their government-assigned local public school," said Lawson. "ESAs allow parents to purchase textbooks, hire tutors, enroll students in online classes, pay private school tuition, and even save money for college. Not surprisingly, in states that have already implemented ESA programs, parents have expressed their approval."

In closing, Lawson praised the progress Ohio has made and encouraged further changes that will give parents and families more control of their children's education. "We are pleased to see Ohio take another step in joining the ranks of these school choice sister states. The Opportunity Scholarship, or any other ESA program, are the types of policies that will further empower parents and students to pursue an education tailored to their individual needs and dreams."

#

**Interested Party Testimony to the
Ohio House Education and Career Readiness Committee on House Bill 200**

**Greg R. Lawson, Research Fellow
The Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions
June 20, 2017**

Thank you, Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Slaby, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify today regarding the Opportunity Scholarship. My name is Greg R. Lawson, and I am the Research Fellow at **The Buckeye Institute** for Public Policy Solutions here in Columbus.

The Buckeye Institute has long been a champion of school choice. In the early days of the Cleveland Scholarship and the dawn of Ohio charter schools, we defended the right of every parent to seek and provide the education best suited to their children. So we take great pride in Ohio's national leadership in the school choice movement.

The "Opportunity Scholarships" in House Bill 200 will join with other Ohio programs to give families even more education options and opportunities. House Bill 200 will continue to shift the balance of power in education from a bureaucratic establishment to its rightful place-parents.

Despite the exceptional resources devoted to schools and education over the last few decades, we have yet to see academic gains commensurate with those investments. At least one reason we seem unable to reap significant gains lies in our failure to adapt to the changing realities of our new century. Our education model remains stuck in the post-Industrial Age of 20th century mass production while our children-the supposed beneficiaries of that model-live and think in the increasingly made-to-order 21st.

Today our children watch videos on demand -- choosing not only the movie they want to watch, but when and where and how they want to watch it. They expect customized service -- on demand-and they get it, in practically every facet of lives except their education. In the name of modernity and progress, schools today offer digital gadgets-iPads, Smartboards, and Chromebooks-but the education they provide is far from personal, customized, or individually tailored to meet the specific needs of specific students. Education continues to be delivered *en masse* rather than on demand, as if learning is somehow impervious to customization.

Part of the problem still lies with education's bureaucratic entrenchment. And part of the solution remains school choice-the critical process of tearing down the bureaucratic silos of our beleaguered education system.

House Bill 200 and the "Opportunity Scholarship" combine the current EdChoice voucher, the EdChoice income eligible expansion, and the Cleveland Scholarship, and streamline the structure of these programs to simplify the application process and expand the pool of eligible children.

Currently, eligibility for EdChoice scholarships is based upon a failing schools model. This relatively rare structure for voucher programs allows for too much gamesmanship and includes "safe harbor" provisions that have rendered hundreds of otherwise eligible schools ineligible for the program.

And even though the EdChoice expansion scholarship is income-based, its low eligibility threshold restricts its impact. Consequently, thousands of students miss out on significant EdChoice options. By shifting to a single-income eligibility model that allows for

scholarships up to 400 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, House Bill 200 will provide more students with more options.

In addition to improvements afforded by the "Opportunity Scholarship," House Bill 200 also includes education savings accounts -- or ESAs. This innovative school choice feature significantly expands learning options for families. As The Buckeye Institute **recently explained**, ESAs begin to realign the education paradigm toward meeting "consumer" interests, namely, parents, children, and taxpayers. By creating a more responsive education system, ESAs give families the purchasing power to create a customized education for their children, empowering them to order from an à la carte menu of education services, instead of suffering the one-size-fits-all model of education currently provided by their government-assigned local public school. I have attached a copy of **our report** to my testimony for your convenience.

The additional flexibility offered by ESAs distinguishes them from traditional voucher models, making them more like Ohio's Special Needs and Jon Peterson scholarships. ESAs allow parents to purchase textbooks, hire tutors, enroll students in online classes, pay private school tuition, and even save money for college. Not surprisingly, in states that have already implemented ESA programs, parents have expressed their approval.

In 2011, Arizona became the first state to offer education savings accounts, and currently extends that option to children with special needs; children in active duty military families; children of fallen soldiers; children in underperforming schools; children on tribal lands; children entering kindergarten; and siblings of ESA-eligible students.

Two months ago, Arizona expanded her program yet again to include more prospective students. Building on Arizona's groundbreaking efforts, Nevada created a universal ESA option in 2015 for all K-12 students. Since then, Florida, Tennessee, and Mississippi have established ESA opportunities, and many other states are now actively considering proposals to provide or expand ESA options for their families.

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We are encouraged to see Ohio joining the ranks of these school choice sister states. House Bill 200 and the "Opportunity Scholarships" will continue Ohio's progress in empowering parents and students to pursue an education tailored to their individual needs and dreams.

Thank you for your time and attention today. I would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

#

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21, 2017

The Buckeye Institute's Greg Lawson Urges Ohio to Reduce Bureaucratic Occupational Licensing Requirements

Lawson Testifies Before the Ohio House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee

Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute's Greg R. Lawson testified (see full testimony below) today before the Ohio House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, where he urged the state to remove barriers to employment for thousands of cosmetologists across Ohio. The policies, included in House Bill 189 would make Ohio more competitive, more prosperous, and more attractive to entrepreneurs and their employees.

Highlighting the absurdity in Ohio's occupational licensing requirements, Lawson, a research fellow at The Buckeye Institute, said, "Unfortunately, Ohio cosmetologists must

complete 250 more hours of training than their peers in Pennsylvania and 500 more hours than hairdressers in New York. The onerous training required for Ohio's cosmetologists is even more ridiculous when compared to the 150 hours of training required to be a state certified emergency medical technician."

Lawson continued, "With Ohio law currently requiring cosmetologists to have *10 times* the training of basic EMTs, the need for licensing reform doesn't get much clearer."

Citing The Buckeye Institute's report *Forbidden to Succeed: How Licensure Laws Hold Ohioans Back*, Lawson revealed that Ohio's occupational licensing burdens are some of the worst in the nation. "Remarkably, nearly every Ohio license that requires training can be earned in less time in another state," said Lawson. "The state certainly needs to require appropriate training and licensing for jobs with health and safety concerns, such as physicians and pilots, and no one disputes this. But such concern fades dramatically when applied, for example, to auctioneers, travel guides, and hairdressers."

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In closing, Lawson praised the progress Ohio has made and encouraged further changes that will make Ohio more competitive, more prosperous, and more attractive to entrepreneurs and their employees. "For a state still struggling to create new jobs, relieving these burdens remains imperative...House Bill 189 advances the state's anti-red-tape reform effort and will remove at least some of the occupational licensing obstacles faced by Ohio's working men and women."

#

**Interested Party Testimony to the
Ohio House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee on House Bill 189**

**Greg R. Lawson, Research Fellow
The Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions
June 21, 2017**

Thank you, Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to testify regarding House Bill 189. My name is Greg R. Lawson. I am the research fellow at **The Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions**, a free-market think tank that believes low taxes and limited government regulations will lead to a more prosperous Ohio.

House Bill 189 helps to address Ohio's "over-licensing" problem and will continue the important work started by Senate Bill 213 in the last General Assembly that lowered barriers of entry to Ohio's salon industry. Others have already addressed specific provisions in this bill, so let me just say that The Buckeye Institute generally supports reducing required education hours and we encourage policymakers to embrace license reciprocity with our sister states. After all, licensed cosmetologists in good standing in New York and Massachusetts should not have to clear additional hurdles to provide the same services and earn their living here in Ohio.

Unfortunately, Ohio cosmetologists must complete 250 hours of more training than their peers in Pennsylvania and 500 more hours than hairdressers in New York.^[1] The onerous training required for Ohio's cosmetologists is even more ridiculous when compared to the 150 hours of training required to be a state certified Emergency Medical Technician.^[2] With Ohio law currently requiring cosmetologists to have *10 times* the training of basic EMTs, the need for licensing reform doesn't get much clearer.

Ohio's over-licensing problem extends well beyond the local hair salon. The Buckeye Institute's report *Forbidden to Succeed: How Licensure Laws Hold Ohioans Back* revealed that Ohio's occupational licensing burdens are well above average.^[3] Of Ohio's 31 moderate-income occupations requiring licensure, 15 require hundreds or thousands of hours of training. Remarkably, nearly every Ohio license that requires training can be earned in less time in another state.^[4] The state certainly needs to require appropriate training and licensing for jobs with health and safety concerns, such as physicians and pilots, and no one disputes this. However, such concern fades dramatically when applied, for example, to auctioneers, travel guides, and hairdressers.

Onerous licensing burdens -- essentially requiring workers to ask the government for a permission slip to earn a living -- make Ohio less competitive, less prosperous, and less attractive to entrepreneurs and their employees. Licensing requirements only make finding a job more difficult. Every unnecessary license is a red-taped hurdle that must be cleared. Every hour of unnecessary, unpaid training needed to satisfy bureaucratic requirements is an hour not spent earning tips, impressing a boss, serving a customer, or climbing a corporate ladder. Those are hours of productivity, hours of opportunity that young, low-income workers sorely need, but that the state continues to take away. For a state still struggling to create new jobs, relieving these burdens remains imperative. Although Ohio has done yeoman's work to recover from the Great Recession, she has not yet rebounded from the tech bubble burst and is still down more than 100,000 private sector jobs from March 2000. The state's labor force participation rate has improved, but at just 63.1 percent in April, more remains to be done.^[5]

Even more concerning are the daunting employment prospects faced by many in Ohio's minority communities. Nationally, the unemployment rate among African Americans remains much higher than among other demographics. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the most recent unemployment rate was 7.9 percent for African Americans -- more than double the 3.8 percent unemployment rate for whites.^[6] Similarly, unemployment confronts a staggering 29.3 percent of young African Americans between 16 and 19, and 12.8 percent of young whites.^[7]

Given the relatively high number of African Americans and women in the salon industry, reforming Ohio's cosmetology laws offers a direct response to those alarming statistics.

House Bill 189 advances the state's anti-red-tape reform effort and will remove at least some of the occupational licensing obstacles faced by Ohio's working men and women. Of course, much more than HB 189 is needed and I look forward to exploring additional solutions with you and continuing our conversation on this important issue.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions that the Committee might have.

[1] Ohio. Rev. Code ½ 74713.28.

[2] Ohio Admin. Code §4765-15-05.

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[3] Tom Lampman, *Forbidden to Succeed: How Licensure Laws Hold Ohioans Back*, The Buckeye Institute, November 18, 2015.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, "[Employment Situation Indicators for Ohio, April 2017](#)," accessed May 30, 2017.

[6] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "**Table A-2. Employment Status of Civilian Population by Race, Sex, and Age,**" U.S. Department of Labor, accessed May 30, 2017.

[7] *Ibid.*

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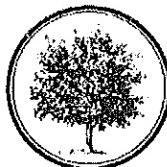
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21, 2017

Buckeye Institute Experts Weigh-In on Ohio Senate Passed Budget

Columbus, OH - The **Ohio Senate** passed its version of Ohio's biennial budget this evening and experts from **The Buckeye Institute** issued their reactions on spending, the Senate's Medicaid proposal, occupational licensing reform, and criminal justice reform.

Spending

"The final Ohio Senate budget keeps spending on a tight leash by historical budget standards, which is a real accomplishment," said **Greg R. Lawson**, research fellow at The Buckeye Institute. "However, there are many reductions that can still be made to assure the budget remains balanced. This could be especially important if revenues remain slower than anticipated and to assure for long-term sustainability of state budgets moving forward. We would hope some of these reductions will be considered in the conference committee."

Senate's Medicaid Proposal

"The Senate proposal to freeze Medicaid expansion is a prudent step to help focus Medicaid services on the needy," said **Rea S. Hederman Jr.**, executive vice president at The Buckeye Institute and a nationally recognized expert in healthcare policy. "Medicaid expansion enrollment has drastically exceeded expectations and an enrollment freeze will enable the state to refocus the program. The Senate should also add a Medicaid freeze to the Healthy Ohio waiver that is also in the budget."

Senate's Proposal Requiring State Agencies to Seek the Least Restrictive Occupational Licensing Requirements

"We are very pleased to see that the Senate has added a provision to the budget that will submit state agencies to efficiency reviews and that the Senate has made it clear they intend for occupational licensing requirements to be a part of those reviews," said Greg R. Lawson, research fellow at The Buckeye Institute. "This provision will ensure state agencies impose the 'least restrictive' regulatory requirement when dealing with occupational licenses, which will help alleviate unnecessary burdens on thousands of Ohioans by making it easier for them to cut through state red tape and start working more quickly."

Criminal Justice Reform

"When the Senate unveiled their budget last week we commended them for retaining the **Target Community Alternatives to Prison** (TCAP) program and we are pleased it was included in the final version of the Senate's budget," said **Daniel J. Dew**, criminal justice fellow at The Buckeye Institute's **Legal Center**. "TCAP will enable counties to rehabilitate low-level, non-violent offenders in their communities, which studies have shown is more effective and less costly than prison. While participation will be voluntary for less populous counties, we anticipate counties will jump on board as judges and county officials see their sister counties benefiting from TCAP."

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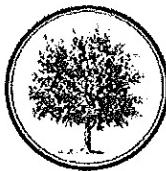
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THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

Onwards to Conference Committee: Ohio's Biennial Budget Passes the Senate

By Greg R. Lawson
June 23, 2017

As always, the state budget, passed every two years, is the single most important piece of legislation passed by the Ohio General Assembly. Tax, education, health care, criminal justice, and local government issues are all touched on in this critical legislation. Getting budget policy right means making sure resources are spent wisely on the things government must do. Just as importantly, it means enhancing liberty, creating a better environment for job and economic growth, and securing prosperity for Bob and Betty Buckeye.

The budget that cleared the Senate on June 21 is a very good step forward. However, there is always more that can be done. In this case, there is definitely more spending that should be reduced and bolder reforms that should be embraced on taxes, education, and health care.

That said, as the next chapter of the budget commences and we move to the all-important Conference Committee, **The Buckeye Institute** has highlighted what has been done right and what can be done to improve the budget.

Spending

The Senate **version of the budget** decreased Governor Kasich's original All Funds budget by \$3 billion over fiscal years 2018 and 2019. The FY 2018 appropriations is an increase of 2.7 percent over the estimated FY 2017 spending, and the FY 2019 appropriation is 1.5 percent over FY 2018.

By historical budget standards this is positive. The average over the biennium comes in at 2.1 percent. Though this remains above recent inflation and state GDP growth, it tracks more closely than other recent budgets. For example, the **previous biennial budget**, when enacted, was an increase of 7.6 percent in the first fiscal year and 2.1 percent in the second for an average of 4.85 percent over the biennium.

When looking at state-only general revenues, we see an increase of \$370.9 million over the proposed FY 2018-2019 budget when compared to the expected expenditures made in the previous biennium. This is an increase of only .8 percent. Given recent revenue shortfalls, this is important.

A further positive sign is the Senate maintained restraints on the ability of the Controlling Board to increase Medicaid spending. This is wise policy given the serious questions regarding potential changes in federal Medicaid policy.

Despite this positive spending restraint, there are areas where further cuts (see our **Piglet Book**) could be made in order to maintain long-term budget sustainability.

More than \$200 million in increased foundation formula funding for education should be reconsidered. Ohio continues to spend ever-increasing amounts on K-12 education, with limited academic gains to show for it. Ohio needs a much broader conversation in *how* this money is spent.

Also, more than \$770 million in general revenue funding is still being spent as a revenue sharing distribution through the Local Government Fund (LGF). The Buckeye Institute continues **to maintain** this revenue should be used to further reduce personal income tax rates across the board. By reducing this revenue sharing, Ohio will empower local residents and taxpayers to hold their local officials accountable for local decisions.

Taxes

Ohio tax reform has led to positive economic growth for the state and this will continue over time as the state shows budget restraint.

Both the Senate and the House made the right call to not raise taxes or shift taxes to particular industries, such as **oil and gas companies**. Both chambers also rightly resisted the urge to hike the tobacco tax, which would open up the door for **smuggling**, in addition to other unintended consequences.

While The Buckeye Institute prefers Governor Kasich's proposal to simplify municipal income tax filings for businesses, the current reform included by the Senate still allows businesses to avail themselves of a simpler system. While this is merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to reforming Ohio's **singularly unique, complex, and burdensome municipal income tax structure**, it is still a step forward.

Medicaid

The current version contains language pushing the Administration to seek both the **Healthy Ohio waiver** and a **State Innovation waiver**. When combined, these two waivers will control Medicaid costs, create personal responsibility requirements for Medicaid recipients, and will ease the transition to a better private insurance marketplace. These waivers will also include fewer mandates that balloon insurance costs.

The Senate proposal to freeze Medicaid expansion is a prudent step to help focus Medicaid services on the needy. Expansion enrollment has drastically exceeded expectations and an enrollment freeze will enable the state to refocus the program.

One item ripe for Conference Committee consideration is to ensure that the Controlling Board guidelines on Medicaid spending are robust enough to ensure the Administration **must** obtain approval before spending on the expansion.

Criminal Justice Reform

Governor Kasich's budget included an expansion of the **Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison** (TCAP) program, which provides grants to counties to rehabilitate low-level, non-violent offenders locally, a **more effective** approach than prison at a fraction of the cost. Expansion of TCAP would provide more resources to communities as they deal with the opioid epidemic, increase public safety, and save taxpayer dollars.

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The Senate version only binds Ohio's 10 most populous counties to the TCAP program, with the remaining 77 counties participating on a voluntary basis. We are confident, that once the benefits of TCAP are realized, more counties will want to participate.

Agency Review Process

The Buckeye Institute is pleased to see that the Senate has added a provision to the budget that will submit state agencies to efficiency reviews and that the Senate has made it clear they intend for occupational licensing requirements to be a part of that review.

These provisions will ensure state agencies impose the 'least restrictive' regulatory requirement when dealing with occupational licenses, which will help alleviate unnecessary burdens on thousands of Ohioans by making it easier for them to cut through state red tape and start working more quickly.

The inclusion of occupational licensing requirement in these reviews, begin to address issues we discussed in our report *Forbidden to Succeed: How Licensure Laws Hold Ohioans Back*.

Conclusion

Now the Conference Committee will begin its work and they should build on the fairly successful efforts made to restrain spending and reform the key driver of increased spending - Medicaid. The committee should also retain sound tax provisions including the municipal income tax reform, criminal justice reforms including TCAP, and retain the administrative agency review process including the new definition regarding least restrictive regulations.

By doing these things, with the addition of more cuts, the committee could further improve an already solid budget.

Greg R. Lawson is the research fellow at The Buckeye Institute.

#

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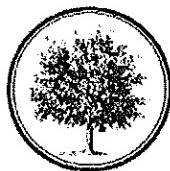
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2017

House Bill 289 Introduced, Buckeye Weighs-In on the Need for Occupational Licensing Reform

Columbus, OH - Representative Robert McColley and Representative Ron Hood today introduced important legislation, which will reduce barriers to employment for thousands of Ohioans by requiring the state to impose the least restrictive type of occupational licensing regulation to ensure consumer protection.

The legislation will also establish a sunrise review process on new occupational licensing bills to ensure they meet the least restrictive standard, and the bill will establish a sunset review process of licensing boards to ensure they are necessary protect public health and safety. Over time, the use of these reviews will help clean up antiquated licensing requirements while preventing new ones from cluttering Ohio's laws.

"As legislators, it is our duty to be watchdogs over these licensing agencies to ensure they are not imposing overly burdensome regulations that impose barriers to entry and, ultimately, pick winners and losers. **House Bill 289** does just that by providing oversight to make sure we are not unjustifiably preventing Ohioans from making a living," said Rep. McColley. "We thank The Buckeye Institute and other free-market focused groups for their ongoing input."

The Buckeye Institute has long spoken out on the need to reduce burdens created by bureaucratic **occupational licensing**, a position that is supported by the **Heritage Foundation**, **Cato Institute**, and **Brookings Institute**, and was supported by the **Obama Administration**. In fact, research has shown that Ohio **sacrifices more than 40,000 jobs** due to occupational licensing, and that **18 percent of Ohioans require a license** in order to earn a living in their chosen profession. Further, the **cost of hiring a licensed worker is approximately 15 percent higher** than an unlicensed worker with the same level of experience doing the same job, and families in Ohio could **save \$775 per year** with occupational licensing reform.

"The Buckeye Institute has long argued that we need to lower barriers of entry for all Ohioans into their chosen professions," said Greg R. Lawson, research fellow at **The Buckeye Institute**. "By making it the policy of the state to be the least restrictive as possible when it comes to occupational licensing, Ohio takes a large step to rolling back and preventing the 'permission slip' approach to regulation that is harming all too many Ohio workers."

#

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2017

The Buckeye Institute's Greg Lawson: Occupational Licensing Requirements are an Obstacle to Economic Success

Lawson Testifies Before the Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee

Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute's Greg R. Lawson testified (see full testimony below) today before the Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, where he once again urged the state to remove barriers created by bureaucratic **occupational licensing** requirements that keep Ohioans from earning a living in their chosen profession.

As with the policies in House Bill 189, which **Lawson testified on last week**, the policies in Senate Bill 79 will make Ohio more competitive, more prosperous, and more attractive to entrepreneurs and their employees.

Lawson, the research fellow at The Buckeye Institute, opened his testimony highlighting the broad support reducing burdensome occupational licensing requirements has. "The Buckeye Institute, the **Heritage Foundation**, the **Brookings Institute**, and the **Obama Administration** do not often all agree on an issue. However, we have all agreed on the need to relieve the burdens created by bureaucratic occupational licensing that afflict workers and families with low- to middle-incomes." Lawson continued, "By authorizing legislative panels to weed through Ohio's overgrown thicket of licensing boards, the policy in Senate Bill 79 gives lawmakers a much-needed tool for uprooting bureaucratic thistles that deprive Ohioans of the potential fruits of their labor. Thus, this bill takes a welcome step toward improving Ohio's job market and making it easier for Ohio's working class families to prosper.

While the policies in Senate Bill 79 will make improvements to Ohio's "byzantine" licensing requirements, Lawson noted that further improvements to reduce the negative impacts of licensing requirements can be made. "Senate Bill 79 improves the status quo, but unfortunately it lacks the proverbial teeth necessary to force state licensing boards to prove that they are essential for ensuring public safety rather than merely defending entrenched market interests. The bill could be strengthened by including sunset provisions for state licensing boards and commissions similar to the automatic provisions applied to cabinet agencies."

In closing, Lawson highlighted the negative impact on employment licensing requirements have, particularly in minority communities where unemployment is higher. "Licensing requirements make finding a job more difficult. Every license requirement raises a red-taped hurdle for workers to clear before earning a living or starting a new career. Every hour of unpaid training needed to satisfy bureaucratic requirements is an hour not spent earning tips, impressing a boss, serving a customer, or opening a business. Those are hours of lost productivity, hours of opportunity that young, low-income workers sorely need, but that the state continues to take for itself."

#

**Interested Party Testimony Submitted to the
Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee on Senate Bill 79**

**Greg R. Lawson, Research Fellow
The Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions
June 28, 2017**

Thank you, Chairman Coley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni, and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify regarding Senate Bill 79. My name is Greg Lawson and I am the Research Fellow at **The Buckeye Institute** for Public Policy Solutions here in Columbus.

The Buckeye Institute, the **Heritage Foundation**, the **Brookings Institute**, and the **Obama Administration** do not often all agree on an issue. However, we have all agreed on the need to relieve the burdens created by bureaucratic occupational licensing that afflict workers and families with low- to middle-incomes. By authorizing legislative panels to weed through Ohio's overgrown thicket of licensing boards, the policy in Senate Bill 79 gives lawmakers a much-needed tool for uprooting bureaucratic thistles that deprive Ohioans of the potential fruits of their labor. Thus, this bill takes a welcome step toward improving Ohio's job market and making it easier for Ohio's working class families to prosper.

No one disputes that state licensing requirements are needed in many cases and industries to help ensure public safety. Requiring appropriate education and training for physicians, health care providers, pilots, and truck drivers, for example, helps safeguard the general public in our hospitals, roads, and runways. However, these concerns fade dramatically when applied to auctioneers, travel guides, and hairdressers -- all of whom are subject to Ohio's byzantine licensing requirements.

According to the Heritage Foundation, occupational licensing requirements cost the average U.S. household \$1,033 per year.^[1] Analysts across the political spectrum recently revealed significant sources of occupational licensing and their adverse effects on the nation's job and labor markets. As part of the Brookings Institute's Hamilton Project, for instance, researchers discovered that much of the growth in occupational licensing requirements stems from professional associations and not from public interest groups.^[2] Unsurprisingly, their research also showed that stringent licensing requirements result in fewer providers of the services subject to the requirements.^[3]

The Obama Administration echoed these concerns in a July 2015 report issued by the White House that proposed a framework for reducing burdens on those seeking to enter the professional ranks.^[4] Last year, The Buckeye Institute released ***Forbidden to Succeed: How Licensure Laws Hold Ohioans Back***, which showed not only that Ohio's licensing burdens are well above the national average, but also that nearly every Ohio license that requires training can be earned in less time in another state.^[5]

The ladder to economic prosperity is hard enough to climb without the state making it even harder and more expensive. Fortunately, several provisions in Senate Bill 79 hand the General Assembly new tools for weeding out some of Ohio's most unnecessary and burdensome licenses. Senate Bill 79 codifies provisions that would automatically sunset cabinet agencies absent specific reauthorization. It authorizes the General Assembly to review Ohio's licensing boards and provides good guidance for how legislative committees should conduct their examinations. It also makes clear that state policy will rely on the "least restrictive form of regulation" as a means of consumer protection.

Those forms of regulation, in order from least to most restrictive, are as follows: market competition; third-party or consumer-created ratings and reviews; private certification; specific private civil cause of action; actions under the Ohio Consumer Sales Practices Act; regulating the process of providing specific goods or services; inspection; bonding or insurance; registration; government certification; specialty occupational license for medical reimbursement; and occupational licensing.

Senate Bill 79 improves the status quo. Unfortunately, it lacks the proverbial teeth necessary to force state licensing boards to prove that they are essential for ensuring public safety rather than merely defending entrenched market interests. The bill could be strengthened by including sunset provisions for state licensing boards and commissions similar to the automatic provisions applied to cabinet agencies.

Policymakers should recognize that requiring workers to ask the government for permission to earn a living makes Ohio *less* competitive, *less* prosperous, and *less* attractive to entrepreneurs and their employees. For a state still struggling to create new jobs, "less" is not more.

Ohio has come a long way since the Great Recession, but it has not yet rebounded from the tech bubble burst and remains down more than 100,000 private sector jobs from its peak in March 2000.^[6] The state's labor force participation rate has improved in recent months and is now slightly higher than the national rate, but in recent years, Ohio has flirted ominously with historically low participation rates. So, although Ohio's job market continues to improve, it still has a long way to go.

Licensing requirements make finding a job more difficult. Every license requirement raises a red-taped hurdle for workers to clear before earning a living or starting a new career. Every hour of unpaid training needed to satisfy bureaucratic requirements is an hour not spent earning tips, impressing a boss, serving a customer, or opening a business. Those are

hours of lost productivity, hours of opportunity that young, low-income workers sorely need, but that the state continues to take for itself.

Tragically, such burdens are borne no less lightly by those in Ohio's minority communities -- communities already facing daunting employment prospects. Nationally, the unemployment rate among African Americans remains much higher than among other demographics. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the most recent unemployment rate was 7.5 percent for African Americans -- more than double the 3.7 percent unemployment rate for whites.^[7] Similarly, unemployment confronts a staggering 27.3 percent of young African Americans between 16 and 19, and 11.4 percent of young whites.^[8] Given the relatively high number of African Americans and women in the salon industry.

Reforming Ohio's occupational licensing regime will help remove at least some of the burdens and obstacles to economic success.

Thank you for your time and I welcome any questions that the Committee might have.

[1] Salim Furth, *Costly Mistakes: How Bad Policies Raise the Cost of Living*, Heritage Foundation, November 23, 2015.

[2] Morris M. Kleiner, *Reforming Occupational Licensing Policies*, Brookings Institute, March 2015.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] The White House, *Occupational Licensing: a Framework for Policymakers*, July 2015.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] The Buckeye Institute, "Ohio by the Numbers - October 2015," The Buckeye Institute.

[7] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table A-2. Employment Status of Civilian Population by Race, Sex, and Age," U.S. Department of Labor, accessed June 26, 2017.

[8] *Ibid.*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2017

Buckeye Institute Experts Weigh-In on Budget Conference Committee Report

Columbus, OH - The Senate and House have passed the Budget Conference Committee Report and experts from The Buckeye Institute issued their reactions.

"The final version of the state budget that is heading to Governor Kasich's desk is one of the best budgets we have seen in a while in Ohio," said Greg R. Lawson, research fellow at The Buckeye Institute. "While there could have been greater spending reductions, along with greater reform of school funding and local taxes, there was solid spending restraint and efforts to contain Medicaid spending -- the 'Pac-Man' of Ohio's budget. These are all noteworthy accomplishments."

Several major policies The Buckeye Institute has advocated for made it through the legislative process, including:

- Greater spending restraint;
- Making it clear that the policy of the state is to seek the least restrictive regulations when dealing with occupational licensing;
- Several key criminal justice reforms;
- Reform to business municipal income tax filing;
- Freezing Medicaid expansion enrollment; and
- Setting a deadline for applying for a state innovation waiver in order to regain some control over Ohio's health insurance marketplace.

Spending

"The budget keeps a tighter rein on spending than most recent budgets, with all funds spending in fiscal years 2018 and 2019 increasing by 2.4 percent and 2.1 percent respectively. When looking at just state general revenues, Ohio will spend less in FY2019 than it was projected to spend by the end of the current fiscal year on June 30," said Lawson. "This move to a more sustainable level of state spending will help secure prosperity for Ohioans and their children."

Medicaid

"The General Assembly took a bold step in ensuring that needy Ohioans can get access to the medical care they need. The Assembly's budget calls for changes to the Medicaid program that will boost health care savings for many Medicaid recipients and help move them into private coverage," said **Rea S. Hederman Jr.**, executive vice president at The Buckeye Institute and a nationally recognized expert in healthcare policy. "Ohio became the first state in the nation to call for a freeze on the Medicaid expansion population, which will focus the program on the truly needy and encourage able bodied adults to return to work. Medicaid enrollment has exceeded forecasts on both enrollment and costs, and this budget will help make the program sustainable for the future."

Criminal Justice

"At every step of the budget process, starting with Governor Kasich's original budget through conference committee, Ohio policymakers showed devotion to providing tools and resources to make Ohio communities safer and save taxpayer dollars through criminal justice reform," said **Daniel J. Dew**, legal fellow at The Buckeye Institute's **Legal Center**. "When society sends low-level offenders to prison, taxpayers pay a hefty bill only to see these people come back to our communities alienated from society and more dangerous than when they went in. The governor, the Senate, and the House all recognize that Ohioans deserve a better return on their investment."

Dew continued, "By providing resources to Ohio communities, the budget's **Target Community Alternatives to Prison** (TCAP) program will allow local judges, law enforcement, and prosecutors to get low-level offenders, many of whom are struggling with addiction and mental health issues, the treatment necessary to help prevent a life of hardened crime. TCAP has been a success in the eight pilot program counties, and as it is adopted around the state, Ohioans everywhere will reap the benefits of evidence-based policy."

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In case you were wondering what the bloody h-e-double-hockey-stick is happening in the war going on tonight and tomorrow over Ohio's biennial budget, we have a timely update: Governor Kasich--by law--has until Friday to either sign or veto the final budget that was passed today before the new fiscal year begins on Saturday....

Pressure is mounting. All eyes are once again on our beloved state.

In this battle, your Buckeye Institute has indefatigably supplied the intellectual ammunition of good policy to a legislature that was set on trying to do the fiscally responsible thing.

Governor Kasich is big on making choices as to taking one of two paths, and his time for choosing has officially arrived.

There is a fiscally responsible option, which is to sign the budget, and there is a decision that would saddle our children and grandchildren with unsustainable levels of government programs and spending for generations, which is to line-item veto the waiver provisions upon which Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof heroically insisted.

Your Buckeye Institute has spoken up every chance we had--in the thick of negotiations, to the media, and publicly on the record to anyone who would listen.

There is now nothing more that we can do except cross our fingers, hope, and pray to {insert deity of your choice} that Governor Kasich returns to his fiscally conservative roots and proves how firm his friendship is to O-H-I-O.

A few hours ago, Buckeye's Executive Vice President Rea Hederman posted a new piece in The Hill explaining the Medicaid expansion and healthcare issue more fully in an article worth reading, "[Ohio is blazing the trail on healthcare reform.](#)"

To paraphrase Bill Clinton, the big-government jig is up, friends.

It's time to put Obamacare down to its final resting place and lead these United States back toward freedom and prosperity.

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Your call, Mr. Governor.

Let's do it! Let's put Ohio back on the map as the undisputed leader of our nation once again. Blaze that trail. Show the rest of the states how it's done by rejecting Obamacare and securing Ohio the flexibility we need to chart our own path forward in healthcare.

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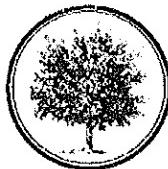
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Buckeye's Rea Hederman has a new piece in *The Hill* looking at the bold health care initiatives that Ohio's General Assembly passed where he says:

"Like many other states across the country, Ohio lawmakers have had enough. Emboldened by the Trump Administration's professed willingness to extend states flexibility on health care and rejoin them at the bargaining table, Ohio will soon be sending Washington Medicaid and state innovation waiver requests designed to curb Medicaid expansion and cut cost overruns."

You can follow Rea on Twitter [@ReaHedermanJr.](#)

Ohio, Blazing the Trail on Health Care Reform

The Hill
By Rea S. Hederman Jr.
June 28, 2017

Ohio is a bellwether state -- it has always has been. So as the U.S. Senate grapples with health care reform legislation and the lingering legacy of ObamaCare, senators would be

well-advised to pay attention to the bold health care initiatives that Ohio's General Assembly just passed.

After Ohio Governor John Kasich unilaterally expanded Ohio's Medicaid program in 2013, the state's Medicaid rolls have since ballooned by more than 700,000 people -- 40 percent more than originally projected. The pac-man of virtually every state's budget continues to devour ever-larger chunks of the state's resources and has pushed Ohio's own budget to the brink.

Like many other states across the country, Ohio lawmakers have had enough. Emboldened by the Trump Administration's professed willingness to extend states flexibility on health care and rejoin them at the bargaining table, Ohio will soon be sending Washington Medicaid and state innovation waiver requests designed to curb Medicaid expansion and cut cost overruns.

Ohio's trial balloon will be watched carefully as other states consider their own waivers to help rein-in runaway Medicaid costs and protect their insurance markets.

The state's General Assembly has just insisted that Governor Kasich submit two significant waiver requests to Trump's Administration by early next year. The waivers will reduce Ohio's Medicaid costs and create a more-seamless transition for people moving from Medicaid into affordable private coverage -- something vitally important given the current death spiral of Obamacare exchanges.

First, the Healthy Ohio program will reduce Medicaid costs and help recipients obtain private coverage. Building on the foundation of Healthy Indiana, Healthy Ohio will require non-disabled Medicaid recipients to contribute to a health savings account, or HSA, and earn rewards for embracing healthier lifestyle choices.

Medicaid recipients who do not pay into a HSA within 60 days will lose coverage until they make the appropriate payment. The Healthy Ohio program will reinforce personal responsibility for medical care and help those with limited histories of receiving coverage acclimate to private health insurance markets.

The second waiver, known as a state innovation or 1332 waiver, will ask Washington to waive several costly burdens imposed by Obama-era regulations, including the unpopular individual mandate and many of the coverage mandates forced on consumers participating in Obamacare exchanges.

The U.S. Senate's healthcare bill appears poised to expand the use of 1332 waivers -- and that's a good sign. As someone once said, elections have consequences, and with Trump in town Ohio and several other states stand ready to return their health insurance markets to more competitive, cost-effective days.

In addition to insisting on seeking greater flexibility from Washington, the Ohio Senate and conservatives in the Ohio House won a hard-fought budget battle and managed to freeze the state's expanded Medicaid population.

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Individuals already enrolled in the expanded population may remain in the program, but as of July 1, 2018, Ohio will not cover the expanded Medicaid population created under the Obamacare framework. Such a freeze will gradually reduce caseloads and focus Medicaid dollars on the most needy -- and Ohio Senators especially, who stood their ground fighting for these reforms, deserve applause and appreciation for their efforts.

As long as Governor Kasich does not misguidedly veto the Assembly's significant achievements, Ohio will blaze a trail for other states to follow as they try to regain control of their healthcare and insurance markets. And once again, as Ohio goes, so goes the nation.

Rea S. Hederman Jr. is executive vice president and chief operating officer of The Buckeye Institute, a think tank promoting free market principles, and is an expert in healthcare policy.

#

Founded in 1989, The Buckeye Institute is an independent research and educational institution - a think tank - whose mission is to advance free-market public policy in the states.

The Buckeye Institute is a non-partisan, nonprofit, and tax-exempt organization, as defined by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. As such, it relies on support from individuals, corporations, and foundations that share a commitment to individual liberty, free enterprise, personal responsibility, and limited government. The Buckeye Institute does not seek or accept government funding.





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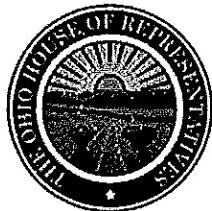
The Buckeye Institute, 88 East Broad Street,
Suite 1120, Columbus, OH 43215

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Sent by info@buckeyeinstitute.org

From: Westlake, Libby
Sent: Thursday, June 29, 2017 2:40 PM
To: Best, Carolyn; Adams, Alexandra; Slack, Cora; Miller, Brad; Cho, Joy
CC: Rossman, Brent
Subject: PR ALERT - Goodman budget (sending at 3:10)



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Majority Communications Department

For Immediate Release:

Rossman
June 29, 2017

Contact: Brent

(614) 644-6265

Rep. Goodman Votes to Rein In Spending and Stop Obamacare, Sends Budget Bill to Governor

COLUMBUS—State Representative Wes Goodman (R-Cardington) today announced that the Ohio House of Representatives has approved the conference committee report on Amended Substitute House Bill 49, the state operating budget. The \$132.8 billion spending plan sets state spending levels for the next two fiscal years. Representative Goodman issued the following statement:

I voted no on the House's initial spending plan for two major reasons: it did not reduce spending levels by a great enough amount and did not make significant enough strides to stop Obamacare's Medicaid expansion in Ohio. I am pleased to report that the conference committee addressed these two concerns, earning my support of the bill today.

State revenue has been coming in under projections for months now, which has required us to make difficult decisions in this budget. Ultimately over a billion dollars in spending was cut from the Governor's proposal to the version of the budget passed, all without raising taxes. The bill now holds spending growth under the rate of inflation, an important accomplishment. In an age where government seems to be always growing and spending more, I am glad to say that the Ohio's budget bucks this trend by limiting growth and forcing the government to live within its means.

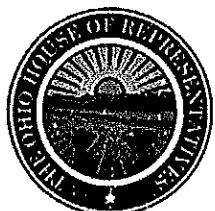
The spending plan passed also freezes enrollment for Obamacare's Medicaid expansion beginning in 2018. This provision puts the brakes on the unsustainable Medicaid program, ensuring that the state's limited resources are preserved for the truly vulnerable. It does this while also ensuring that those who are currently covered through the expansion can maintain their coverage until they are able to improve their situation and obtain a better form of insurance. Make no mistake, this vote is the single most impactful action taken by a state to roll back the Affordable Care Act and ensure better health care choices for Ohioans since the law passed in 2010.

No budget is ever perfect, this one included. Ohio still has many issues confronting us. More must be done to rein in spending and limit the size and scope of government. Businesses and individuals would benefit greatly from fundamental pro-growth tax reform. To remain competitive in the modern economy our state must work to reform labor through right-to-work and get rid of occupational licensing barriers that keep individuals from working. We must ensure that above all, all citizens receive the full protection that the constitutions of the United States and Ohio afford for their liberties."

Am. Sub. H.B. 49 will now head to the Governor for his consideration.

From: Best, Carolyn
Sent: Thursday, June 29, 2017 3:00 PM
To: Westlake, Libby; Adams, Alexandra; Slack, Cora; Miller, Brad; Cho, Joy
CC: Rossman, Brent
Subject: RE: PR ALERT - Goodman budget (sending at 3:10)

From: Westlake, Libby
Sent: Thursday, June 29, 2017 2:40 PM
To: Best, Carolyn <Carolyn.Best@ohiohouse.gov>; Adams, Alexandra <Alexandra.Adams@ohiohouse.gov>; Slack, Cora <Cora.Slack@ohiohouse.gov>; Miller, Brad <Brad.Miller@ohiohouse.gov>; Cho, Joy <Joy.Cho@ohiohouse.gov>
Cc: Rossman, Brent <Brent.Rossman@ohiohouse.gov>
Subject: PR ALERT - Goodman budget (sending at 3:10)



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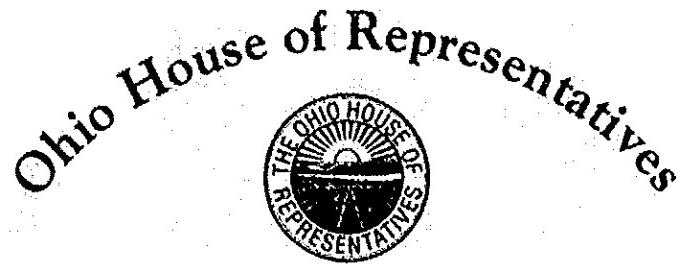
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Am. Sub. H.B. 49 will now head to the Governor for his consideration.

From: Rep87
Sent: Friday, June 30, 2017 1:35 PM
To: GOP_All
Subject: Medicaid Expansion Enrollment Freeze Information
Attachments: Freeze Brief.pdf; We The People Convention Expansion Freeze Poll.pdf



Memorandum

To: House Republican Caucus
From: Representative Wes Goodman
Date: June 30th, 2017
Re: Medicaid Expansion Enrollment Freeze Information

I would first of all like to everyone who has offered their support to the Medicaid expansion enrollment freeze. As I said on this House floor, this is the most impactful action taken by any state to roll back and stop the Affordable Care Act, fulfilling promises we have all made to ensure a higher quality of care for all Ohioans. I thank you for your courage in joining me in the fight to ensure that our citizens are free to make their own healthcare choices, and that our Medicaid program is refocused on serving the truly vulnerable.

By now I am sure you have heard from detractors claiming that the freeze is not in the best interest of Ohioans. I encourage you to take a look at the following resources that support our decision and make clear that an expansion freeze is sound public policy.

- Attached: *Freeze Brief*, provides a general outline and talking points on the expansion freeze.
- Attached: *We the People Convention Expansion Freeze Poll*. This poll was taken yesterday, June 29th, and shows that 60.6% of all Ohioans and 81% of

- all Republicans do NOT want Governor Kasich to line-item veto the expansion freeze.
- Articles by Buckeye Institute Executive Vice President Rea Hederman Jr, published in The Hill
 - Highlighting issues with the sustainability and level of care provided by Medicaid: <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/healthcare/336600-medicare-doesnt-work-people-who-are-on-it-dont-have-better>
 - Highlighting and analyzing Ohio's role in "blazing the trail" on Medicaid reform: <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/healthcare/339889-ohio-is-blazing-the-trail-on-healthcare-reform>
- National Review article analyzing the fallaciousness of the bombastic claim, "people will die!":
<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/448952/obamacare-repeal-will-not-kill-thousands>
 - Note that this article focuses on the claims being made about the Federal healthcare plans. This claim is even more detached from reality when used to decry our expansion freeze, which allows those currently covered to maintain coverage as long as they are eligible.
- Article by Foundation for Government Accountability VP of Research Jonathan Ingram, explaining how the expansion has drawn funding away from the truly vulnerable: <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/healthcare/320620-freezing-obamacare-expansion-will-save-taxpayers-and-the-truly>
- Article by Foundation for Government Accountability Senior Fellow Sam Adolphsen, presenting evidence that the expansion may actually exacerbate the opioid crisis: <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/state-local-politics/339892-want-to-end-the-opioid-epidemic-start-by-freezing>
- Poll from the Foundation for Government Accountability, showing that voters support freezing the Medicaid expansion: <https://thefga.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/National-MedEx-Freeze-Poll-1-23-17.pdf>
- An op-ed that I recently penned that was published by the Daily Signal: <http://dailysignal.com/2017/06/30/ohio-already-rolling-back-parts-obamacare-states-can/>

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to joining you next week to override the Governor's veto, if need be.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance to you. My cell phone is (419) 210-0800 and I am available for questions anytime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wes".

Medicaid Expansion Freeze Brief

What the Freeze Does

- Prohibits the Medicaid program from covering the Group VIII (expansion) population beginning on July 1, 2018.
- Exempts those with diagnosed mental illnesses or drug addiction, allowing them to enroll after the freeze date.
- Allows those expansion enrollees enrolled by July 1, 2018 to maintain their coverage until they become ineligible or the enhanced federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) for the Group VIII population is reduced by federal legislation.

Freezing expansion protects the truly needy

- Ohio's Medicaid waiting list enrollment sits at nearly 60,000. These are Ohioans with severe intellectual and developmental disabilities who aren't getting the care they need.
- Meanwhile, Ohio is spending billions on welfare for able-bodied (mostly childless) adults.
- Every penny spent on these adults is a penny that can't go to help Ohio's truly vulnerable.
- An enrollment freeze would immediately begin to make the truly needy a priority once again by moving able-bodied adults back to independence and freeing up limited resources for the vulnerable.

Freezing expansion protects taxpayers

- Ohio's Medicaid expansion has been overbudget since Day One.
- From January 2014 through March 2017, total expansion costs ran \$6.1 billion higher than originally projected in 2013 – an overrun of 94 percent. By the end of the year, that overrun will total a whopping \$8.3 billion.
- State taxpayers are now on the hook for 5% of these costs, with that share growing to 10% by 2020. Although the state has only been paying a share of the cost for a few months, the state's share has already run \$38 million over projections – an overrun of 125 percent. That overrun is projected to increase to \$145 million by the end of the year.
- Congress is poised to repeal the enhanced funding for expansion altogether. The House version of the American Healthcare Act (AHCA) would eliminate enhanced funding for new enrollees after 2020. The Senate version eliminates enhanced funding through a 3-year phase out, beginning in 2021.
- An enrollment freeze would stop the bleeding immediately, reducing costs and giving taxpayers much-needed relief. Based on the experiences in other states, freezing expansion enrollment at the end of the fiscal year will save between \$4.2 billion and \$5.5 billion over the next biennium. The state share of those savings would total between \$243 million and \$315 million.

Freezing expansion protects enrollees

- An enrollment freeze would allow current enrollees to stay on the program as long as they remain eligible.
- This avoids disruption for enrollees, allowing them to maintain enrollment until their situation improves enough that they can obtain insurance through the individual market or an employer.

Freezing expansion is politically popular

- A national 2017 poll found that voters support freezing Medicaid expansion enrollment by nearly two-to-one margins (53% to 33%).

Freezing expansion is practical and possible

- Other states have used enrollment freezes to unwind pre-ObamaCare expansions to childless adults and to unwind S-CHIP expansions.
- Freezes were previously approved by President Bush and President Obama.
- CMS can grant a waiver to allow states to freeze enrollment.
- CMS is set to release new guidance that will provide state options to freeze enrollment and reduce eligibility levels in the expansion.

Freezing expansion would have no effect on the drug addicted and mentally ill

- Mental health and addiction services accounted for only 5.62% of total expansion spending in 2016.
- Conference committee's version of the budget exempts individuals with mental health and drug addictions from the freeze, allowing them to enroll or reenroll past the freeze date of July 1, 2018.

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, June 29, 2017

POLL SHOWS OHIOANS – ESPECIALLY REPUBLICANS – DEMAND MEDICAID EXPANSION FREEZE

Akron, OH – Tom Zawistowski, President of the We the People Convention announced the results of a statewide Ohio poll tonight concerning the Medicaid Expansion Freeze that was included in the Budget just passed on Wednesday by the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate. Contrary to polls put out by medical groups and others who benefit financially from Medicaid Expansion, the We the People Convention Poll shows that 60.6% of all Ohioans do NOT want Governor Kasich to line-item veto the Medicaid Expansion Freeze in the budget, which does not cut anyone's Medicaid benefits, but simply stops growing the program that is already \$7 Billion over budget. Furthermore, the survey showed that if Governor Kasich does line-item veto the Medicaid Expansion Freeze, a plurality of all Ohioans, 51.7% to 49.3%, said that they would want the Ohio House and Ohio Senate to reconvene next week and override the Governor's veto.

Since the state is controlled by Republicans and the Budget was pass with only Republican votes, all of them from Governor Kasich, to Speaker Rosenberger and Senate President Obhof, and every Republican in the Ohio House and Ohio Senate, will get a very strong message from the poll results from their Republican voters. A total of 81% of Republican voters do NOT want Governor Kasich to line-item veto the Medicaid Expansion Freeze. Then an equally strong 68.5% of Republican voters want Republicans in the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate to Override the Governor's Veto if required.

Commenting on the poll, Zawistowski said, "Ohioans understand that Governor Kasich's Medicaid Expansion is simply unsustainable. We credit the Republican members of the Ohio House and Ohio Senate, and their leadership, for recognizing that someone has to stop Kasich before he bankrupts Ohio. While we in the TEA Party/Liberty movement believe that Medicaid Expansion should be ended – it's not Medicaid it is welfare expansion – we were convinced that a first step of just stopping the growth of the program, without cutting anyone's benefits, was a "caring way" to take a first step as our Governor likes to say. We fully expect him to line-item veto the Medicaid Expansion Freeze because John Kasich sees no reason to ever stop giving other people's money away while pretending he cares so much about people – but never mentioning the tax payers who pay for all his misguided spending. Therefore, we also fully expect, and all Republicans should expect, all 59 House Members who voted for the budget with the Freeze in it on Wednesday, and ALL 7 members who did not vote for the budget, to join all 23 members of the Senate next Thursday, July 6th and impose some financial sanity on the Governor by overriding his veto and representing their constituents – particularly the tax payers in their districts who are paying the bill for this irresponsible and unnecessary spending."

This Ohio poll was conducted for the We the People Convention, Inc. by TRZ Communications Services, Inc. of Akron, Ohio which was the polling company that first predicted the Trump Ohio landslide victory in last year's Presidential election. This automated poll was conducted on Thursday, June 29, 2017 between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. The poll was designed to gather public opinion on the issue of Freezing Medicaid Expansion in Ohio. Calls were placed to 45,105 randomly selected voters from our data base of 4.5 million current land line phone numbers in Ohio. Of the 9,901 who answered our call, 625 respondents completed our automated poll, a 6.3% response rate. The poll has a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$ at the 95% confidence level. Demographically 26.99% of respondents vote Democrat, 29.6% vote Republican and 43% do not affiliate with any party. The gender breakdown was 57.68% women and 42.32% men. Results were gathered from 80 of the 88 Counties in Ohio. Every age group from 24 year olds to 90 year olds were surveyed.

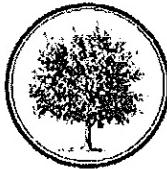
Answer	Number	Percent	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Veto the Freeze	246	39.4%	35 - 19%	90 - 52.3%	121 - 45%
Do NOT Veto the Freeze	379	60.6%	149 - 81%	82 - 47.7%	148 - 55%
Override the Veto	317	51.7%	126 - 68.5%	65 - 37.8%	126 - 46.8%
Do NOT Override the Veto	308	49.3%	58 - 31.5%	107 - 62.2%	142 - 53.2%

Source: <http://www.wethepeopleconvention.org/>

From: The Buckeye Institute
Sent: Saturday, July 1, 2017 12:30 AM
To: Best, Carolyn
Subject: Buckeye Institute: Kasich Signs Ohio's Budget, Vetoes Critical Medicaid Reform

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THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

Contact: Lisa Gates, Vice President of Comms
(614) 224-3255 or Lisa@BuckeyeInstitute.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 1, 2017

Buckeye Institute: Kasich Signs Ohio's Budget, Vetoes Critical Medicaid Reform

Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute issued the following statement on Governor John Kasich's decision to veto the Medicaid freeze.

"We are disappointed that Governor Kasich did not adhere to the will of the General Assembly in putting guard rails on the Medicaid expansion. His veto of the freeze guarantees that this 'Pac-Man' of the state budget will continue to crowd out other critical spending priorities while not ensuring those enrolled in Medicaid are getting access to the best health care."

#

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Suite 1120, Columbus, OH 43215

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Sent by info@buckeyeinstitute.org

From: Gov. Kasich Comm. Dept.
Sent: Saturday, July 1, 2017 8:20 AM
To: Best, Carolyn
Subject: WHAT THEY'RE SAYING: Ohio's New State Budget

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JOHN R. KASICH GOVERNOR • STATE OF OHIO

Communication Department

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT OHIO'S NEW STATE BUDGET

TOM HUMPHRIES, PRESIDENT AND CEO, YOUNGSTOWN/WARREN REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"We're pleased that the governor has signed a budget that balances fiscal restraint with the need to advance programs that stimulate the economy. In particular, we look forward to acting within the framework of the education and workforce development programs that are vital to job creation. We understand that the budgeting process is difficult and ongoing, but we feel that the House, Senate and Governor's Office are getting the job done."

MAURICE CLARETT, FORMER OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PLAYER

"Thank you Governor Kasich for signing into law a plan that will use the incredible resources of our state in smarter ways, to change lives and improve public safety. Like many other Ohioans behind bars today, I made a bad decision when I was younger. However, I was fortunate to get the resources I needed to set me on the right course. The TCAP program in the governor's budget ensures more Ohioans don't just get locked away and forgotten, but get put on a similar path to rehabilitation that ensures they don't

return to jail. Ohio should be proud that its taking a step to not only save money, but to change lives."

THE OHIO SOCIETY OF CPAS

"We applaud the Kasich Administration's leadership and the Ohio General Assembly's guidance in achieving significant, long-sought-after improvements to Ohio's municipal income tax system through passage of centralized collection and eliminating the local throwback rule. Giving business owners the option to file their net profit tax returns on one form and make payments in one place versus the current system of separate filings with potentially dozens - even hundreds - of separate jurisdictions will result in meaningful compliance savings. This change, combined with eliminating the costly throwback rule, will make Ohio an even more attractive state in which to operate a business."

ANDREW E. DOEHREL, PRESIDENT AND CEO, OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

= 3The Ohio Chamber of Commerce appreciates and supports Gov. Kasich's initiatives that help build bridges between education and business. Workforce development is a major focus for companies as it leads to better jobs and economic prosperity for all Ohioans."

CHRIS RUNYAN, PRESIDENT, OHIO CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

"We are extremely grateful to Governor Kasich for his leadership on an issue of great importance to contractors throughout the state – centralized collection of net profits municipal income taxes. For Ohio's contractors, who work in a multitude of cities throughout the year, simplifying the convoluted municipal income tax filing and payment system will bring about a huge reduction in bureaucratic headaches, misspent time, and filing expenses. Instead of dealing with red tape, contractors of all sizes will now be able to focus their time and budgets on creating new jobs in the construction sector by growing their companies."

ROGER GEIGER, VICE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NFIB OHIO

"We are pleased that businesses have a new option to file and pay their municipal net-profit taxes. This important provision will allow Ohio's

entrepreneurs to save significant time, money and other resources in complying with Ohio's unique municipal income tax system. These job creators can now focus on more important matters like expanding their businesses and stimulating the economy. We applaud Commissioner Testa for crafting the proposal, and the Ohio General Assembly and Governor Kasich for their support for this critical reform."

DANIEL J. DEW, LEGAL FELLOW, THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

"When society sends low-level offenders to prison, taxpayers pay a hefty bill only to see these people come back to our communities alienated from society and more dangerous than when they went in. The governor, the Senate, and the House all recognized that Ohioans deserve a better return on their investment.

By providing resources to Ohio communities, the budget's Target Community Alternatives to Prison (TCAP) program will allow local judges, law enforcement, and prosecutors to get low-level offenders, many of whom are struggling with addiction and mental health issues, the treatment necessary to help prevent a life of hardened crime."

GARY TONKS, CEO, THE ARC OF OHIO

"The Arc of Ohio thanks Governor Kasich and the Ohio Legislature for again supporting Ohioans with developmental disabilities. The current budget builds on the historic \$286 million dollar investment made two years ago, by investing 65 million new dollars over the next two years. As a statewide association made up of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, friends, interested citizens and professionals in the disability field, we believe this new funding will strengthen our system and continue to improve the lives of Ohioans with developmental disabilities."

JASON ORCENA, DRPH, MA, PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION OF OHIO HEALTH COMMISSIONERS

"The efforts made by Gov. Kasich and his administration have had a significant impact on families struggling with addiction. The administration's expansion of Medicaid has made treatment and long term solutions possible for many, which is a crucial component in fighting opiate addiction. Gov.

Kasich's support of naloxone distribution programs like Project DAWN is helping to preserve life, a fundamental obligation of the public health system."

JACK HERSHY, PRESIDENT AND CEO, OHIO ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

= 3 Governor Kasich should be commended for first proposing that Ohio community colleges be allowed to offer bachelor's degrees. The common sense approach approved will require community colleges to work in close partnership with local businesses so that the graduates of bachelor's degree programs will have jobs waiting for them after graduation."

MARCIE SEIDEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PREVENTION ACTION ALLIANCE

"Prevention Action Alliance (formerly Drug Free Action Alliance) thanks the Kasich Administration and the 132nd General Assembly for its dedicated and thoughtful consideration in crafting a budget to meet the difficult challenges of Ohio's substance misuse and opiate crisis. In some fashion, this epidemic impacts every sector of our society and nearly every family. The ability for all citizens to thrive is thwarted when those among us are enslaved by these devastating disorders and mental health concerns. We celebrate this budget's strong support to meet the needs across the continuum of prevention, treatment and recovery to offer hope and healing. The Prevention Action Alliance is grateful for this proactive approach to meet the needs of Ohioans."

HOLLY HARRIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUSTICE ACTION NETWORK

"Targeted Community Alternative to Prison, or TCAP, ensures low-level offenders aren't just tossed behind bars with violent criminals, but instead receive community-based treatment proven to achieve better outcomes. Ohio is fortunate to have a governor, legislative leaders and a national voice on reform in Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Director Gary Mohr, all of whom understand that we cannot incarcerate our way out of the drug crisis, and that we must invest in Ohio's people, not just its prisons. With his signature on this budget, Governor Kasich ensures Ohio remains a national leader on smart justice reform, and more importantly, makes Ohio communities stronger and safer."

**RICHARD E. DALTON, BUSINESS MANAGER, INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF
OPERATING ENGINEERS, LOCAL 18**

"We support Governor Kasich's Education Budget which continues to keep education affordable for all Ohioans while holding educational institutions accountable. We appreciate Governor Kasich's persistence, through his Executive Workforce Development Board and other means to look at all the possibilities to get Ohio's workforce on a career path whether it be through a traditional four year college, a community college, a trade apprenticeship school or any other means of educational institution to get Ohio back to full employment."

**JOEL POTTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OHIO JOB AND FAMILY
SERVICES DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**

"Fighting poverty requires big ideas, and the Kasich Administration & General Assembly should be commended for their innovative approach. First established two years ago, the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) provides an unprecedented focus on the caseworker-to-client relationship to help improve long-term outcomes of those looking to move up and out of poverty. By making the program permanent and expanding the eligible population, this budget empowers local agencies to take CCMEP to the next level."

**DR. THOMAS BRIDGEMAN, PROFESSOR OF ECOLOGY AND HARMFUL
ALGAL BLOOM RESEARCHER, UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO**

"The support of Governor Kasich, Chancellor Carey, and the state legislature for Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) research at Ohio's universities is a key catalyst for bringing the considerable expertise of university researchers to bear on a broad range of HAB problems, providing the answers that state agencies need to protect our citizens from HABs."

**DR. MICHELLE JOHNSTON, PRESIDENT, RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF RIO GRANDE**

"We are making important and significant strides in the prevention and response to sexual violence on our Ohio campuses through the Changing Campus Culture initiative. As demonstrated through continued funding by

Governor Kasich and our legislators, the determination to ensure the safety of our students and staff is clear and unyielding."

BUD HITE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LUCAS COUNTY COMMUNITY BASED CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

"As we watch this drug epidemic run rampant throughout our communities, it is reassuring to see our great state step up once again as a national leader and meet these issues head on. Thanks to the leadership of Governor Kasich and Director Gary Mohr, alongside our legislature, Ohio continues to work tirelessly to give communities the resources necessary to change lives for the better."

ROBERT ROOKS, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ALLIANCE FOR SAFETY AND JUSTICE

"In Ohio, there's a recognition across all demographic groups of the need to make changes to the state's criminal justice system. Diverse leaders, including crime survivors, faith leaders, business leaders, and law enforcement, are calling for real reforms. Hopefully this budget will be a down payment on a broader set of reforms to further reduce the number of people in prison for low-level offenses and invest in community health, prevention, and rehabilitation."

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

"The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) supports the provision providing up to \$2.5 million to reimburse our county jails for the psychotropic drugs that are administered to jail inmates. These drugs are generally expensive and thus a significant cost for county jail operations."

SANDRA R. WILLIAMS, OHIO STATE SENATOR, DISTRICT 21

"It is critical that Ohio adapts to the changing demands of the workforce and provide assistance to Ohioans to get properly trained for the jobs available today. I have been a longtime advocate of increasing the funding and access to short-term certificates. I support the Executive and Legislative efforts in this budget that help close the significant gap between the needs of employers and the skills of workers."



From: The Buckeye Institute
Sent: Thursday, July 6, 2017 3:41 PM
To: Best, Carolyn
Subject: Buckeye Experts Weigh-In on House Veto Overrides

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THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 6, 2017

Buckeye Experts Weigh-In on House Veto Overrides

Action Restores Legislative Oversight, Begins to Reform Medicaid but Doesn't do Enough, Misses Opportunity to Hold Local Governments Accountable on Spending

Columbus, OH - Today, the Ohio House overrode several of Governor John Kasich's vetoes and The Buckeye Institute's experts weighed-in.

The House overrode the Governor's veto of a measure which restored legislative oversight to approving Medicaid spending increases rather than limiting approval to the Controlling Board. This is a critical measure to ensure that the will of the people, as expressed through their elected representatives, is honored.

"The Administration tried to restrict the legislature's role in overseeing Ohio's budget by limiting its ability to approve spending increases to Medicaid, which currently accounts for 37 percent of the state's budget," said **Greg R. Lawson**, research fellow

at The Buckeye Institute. "By reasserting its proper oversight role, the Ohio House has sent a clear signal that it, as the elected representatives of the people, is the proper body to approve spending increases."

Lawson continued, "Unfortunately, the House failed to bring up an override of the misguided veto of the Medicaid expansion freeze, which would have further ensured that the program is made sustainable and is focused on the truly needy. Under the Medicaid expansion, the program was originally projected to grow to 440,000 by 2020, but has well exceeded that estimate and currently stands at more than 700,000. If the program isn't reformed, it will crowd out all other important spending priorities and we will saddle our children and grandchildren with unsustainable levels of government spending for generations."

The Ohio House also overrode the Governor's veto of the Healthy Ohio waiver. This override puts back into place the requirement that the Administration submit the waiver request to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"Healthy Ohio is just one part of improving Ohio's Medicaid system and ensuring it is sustainable for the neediest Ohioans," said **Rea S. Hederman Jr.**, executive vice president at The Buckeye Institute and a nationally recognized expert in health care policy. "The program will enable non-disabled Medicaid recipients to contribute to a health savings account and allow them to use that money to purchase private health insurance, giving them access to better quality health care and rewarding them for embracing healthier lifestyle choices."

Unfortunately, the House overrode the Governor's veto of the Medicaid managed care sales tax replacement plan.

"Despite our disagreement with Governor Kasich on vetoing the Medicaid freeze, we were glad he vetoed the proposed replacement for local Medicaid sales tax revenues. It is disappointing the Ohio House has again re-instituted this bad policy," Lawson. "It was obvious that the federal government was going to disallow this tax on Medicaid managed care organizations, and local governments and transit authorities should have known not to rely on this money to fund local services. By overriding the governor's veto, the House has enabled local governments to blame Columbus for 'cutting' funding whenever they want to avoid making tough spending decisions at home rather than do the hard work of making the most efficient use of every local dollar spent."

#

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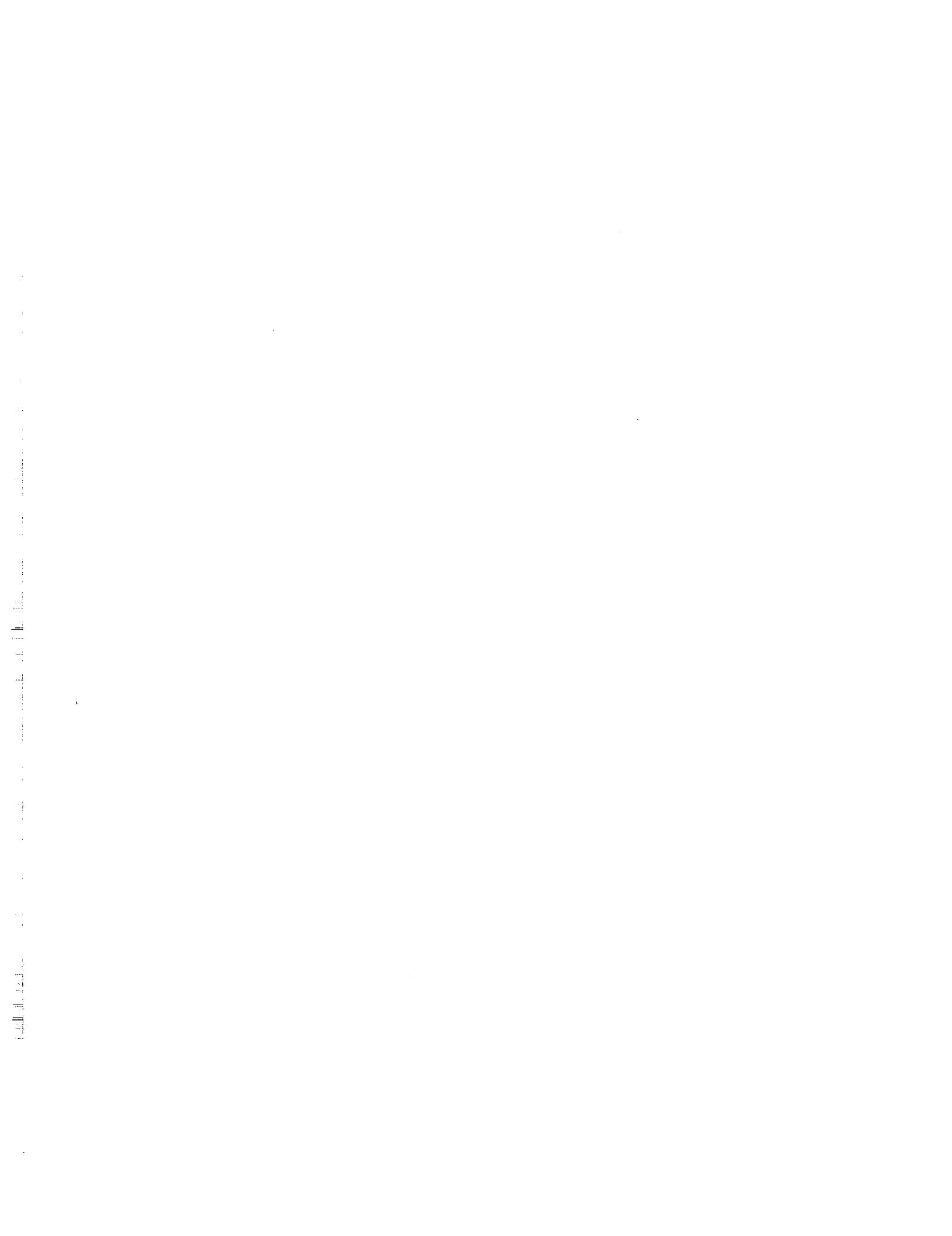
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Legislative Committee Schedules beginning 7/14/2017

Monday, July 17

Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (Committee Record) (Chr. Duffey, M., 644-6030), Rm. 121, 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 18

~~Canceled: Senate Rules & Reference (Committee Record) (Chr. Obhof, L., 466-7505), Majority Conf. Rm., 11 a.m.~~

- If needed
- ~~Canceled: Senate Session-(Committee Record) (Chr. Obhof, L., 466-4900), Senate Chamber, 1:30 p.m.~~
- If needed

Wednesday, July 19

~~Canceled: Senate Rules & Reference (Committee Record) (Chr. Obhof, L., 466-7505), Majority Conf. Rm., 11 a.m.~~

- If needed
- ~~Canceled: House Session-(Committee Record) (Chr. Rosenberger, C., 466-3357), House Chamber, 1:30 p.m.~~
- If needed
- ~~Canceled: Senate Session-(Committee Record) (Chr. Obhof, L., 466-4900), Senate Chamber, 1:30 p.m.~~
- If needed

Wednesday, July 26

~~Canceled: House Session-(Committee Record) (Chr. Rosenberger, C., 466-3357), House Chamber, 1:30 p.m.~~

- If needed

NOTE: Click bill or resolution number links to see the legislative history compiled by Gongwer News Service. Click the # after a bill number to create a saved search and email alert for that bill. Click "Full Text" if present to view the text of legislation on the Legislature's Web site.

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Daily Activity Planner for Friday, July 14-Monday, July 17

Legislative Committees

Thursday, July 13

Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (Committee Record) (Chr. Duffey, M., 644-6030), Rm. 121, 1:30 p.m.

Agency Calendar

Friday, July 14

Accountancy Board, Rm. West B&C, 31st Fl., 77 S. High St., Columbus, 9 a.m. (The Disciplinary Committee meeting will be followed at 9:30 a.m. by the Licensing Committee and at 10 a.m. by the full board)

Board of Building Standards, Division of Industrial Compliance, 6606 Tussing Road, Training Room 1, Reynoldsburg, 10 a.m.

Event Planner

Friday, July 14

Rep. Jeff Rezabek (R-Clayton) golf outing fundraiser, Meadowbrook at Clayton, 6001 Salem Avenue, Clayton, 9 a.m., (9:00am Registration; 10:00am Shotgun Start. Host Sponsor: \$2,500; On-the-Green Supporter: \$1,000; Out-of-the-Bunker Supporter: \$600; Foursome: \$450; Hole Sponsor: \$150; Individual Golfer: \$125 to Citizens for Rezabek)

Monday, July 17

Sen. President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) golf outing fundraiser, Westfield Group Country Club, 6500 Greenwich Rd., Westfield Center, 9:30 a.m., (9:30 am registration; 10:30 am shotgun. \$5,000: Event Sponsor; \$2,500: Lunch Grilling Station Sponsor; \$1,250: Tee/Green Sponsor; \$300 Individual Golfer; \$100 Hospitality Ticket to Citizens for Obhof)

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Senate Activity for Thursday, July 13, 2017

INTRODUCED

SB 172

REDUCED PRICE MEALS (Yuko, K.) To establish the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act to require schools to provide certain services to students who are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Am. 3314.03, 3326.11, and 3328.24 and to enact section 3313.818.

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Volume #86, Report #134 – Thursday, July 13, 2017

Veto Face-Off Rekindles Debate Over 'Healthy Ohio' Medicaid Program

A number of pending veto overrides center on the tug-of-war over prerogatives of the executive and legislative branches, but one in particular comes with a sense of déjà vu.

In the case of Gov. John Kasich's veto Item Number 36, one of 47 provisions he struck from the biennial budget (veto message), the issue involves the GOP-controlled legislature's continuing push to impose more requirements on Medicaid recipients - and the belief that the new right-leaning administration in Washington, D.C. will be more open to such proposals.

Under the budget language championed by Rep. Jim Butler (R-Oakwood), the Kasich administration would have to again seek a controversial Medicaid waiver requiring some members to pay into accounts or be kicked off of the system.

The House voted last week to override the budget (HB 49) veto regarding the "Healthy Ohio" waiver. If that result is echoed in the Senate, which has yet to set a date to consider veto overrides, the state will again submit the request denied by the federal government last year.

While the gist of the proposal hasn't changed, the state's options for pursuing personal responsibility restrictions on Medicaid recipients - as well as the regulators who could approve them - have done so.

The Healthy Ohio program, based on a similar initiative in Indiana, would require non-disabled adults in Medicaid making more than 100% of the poverty level to pay 2% of their income, up to \$99 per year, into an account, which would be used for copayments. The state would also contribute \$1,000 per year into the accounts. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, April 22, 2016)

Rep. Butler said one of the key provisions would allow Medicaid enrollees to take the money accrued in the accounts with them in "bridge accounts" if they move off of Medicaid, easing the so-called benefit cliff as they shift to private insurance.

"This would get rid of the negative incentive so that people can earn more," he said in a recent interview.

Rep. Butler said the plan also incentivizes preventive care, creating credits for services that help keep people healthier.

"Having skin in the game isn't just charging premiums," he said.

The state submitted the waiver request to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services last year after holding the required public hearings and receiving extensive testimony. Those largely featured groups saying it would result in people being kicked off of Medicaid and cause negative outcomes.

CMS rejected the proposal, saying it would lead to people losing coverage. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, September 9, 2016)

Greg Moody, director of the Governor's Office of Health Transformation, told reporters recently that the waiver is likely to be rejected again.

"The challenge with the Healthy Ohio program is it was rejected for violating several specific provisions of federal law. Those provisions of federal law have not changed," he said.

Rep. Butler has said he's optimistic it could meet with federal approval this time. The new head of CMS, Seema Verma, authored the Healthy Indiana plan on which Ohio's is modeled. Federal regulators in the Trump administration have urged states to submit waiver requests as Republican-led efforts in Congress to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act continue.

Democrats and advocacy groups have continued to oppose the Healthy Ohio plan, saying it would result in fewer people getting coverage.

"Many of the cost savings that we have seen from programs like this, including in the state of Indiana, were primarily because people could not keep up with the premium payments and it was not a workable program where people could actually pay into those programs and receive those benefits," Rep. Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) said as the House voted last week to override the governor's veto.

The vetoed language would require the state to submit the waiver request by Jan. 31, 2018.

If the Senate ultimately overrides the veto, the Healthy Ohio request would not be the only one targeting personal responsibility in Medicaid.

State Medicaid Director Barbara Sears and Mr. Moody said the administration doesn't oppose more responsibility in the Medicaid program, and the governor did not veto work requirements added to the budget bill by lawmakers.

"Each of our budgets, we've put a high level of focus on personal responsibility and the idea that Medicaid is a temporary support as people get themselves back to work or into a better job," Director Moody said.

He said the work requirements added by lawmakers are "thoughtful" in that they include exemptions that take into account age, whether an enrollee is in school or a job training program, in recovery from addiction or has serious medical conditions.

Portman, Potential Swing Vote On Health Care Bill, Undecided As Latest Draft Released

Republican leaders in the U.S. Senate unveiled their latest draft of a proposed health care overhaul bill Thursday, which includes the retention of some taxes for the wealthy and the addition of money targeting the opiate crisis.

The Senate majority still faces the difficulty of bringing a number of Republican senators on board who opposed the previous draft of the Better Care Reconciliation Act, including U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-Terrace Park).

Sen. Portman said in a statement he is still undecided on the new version and is reviewing it, although it still would significantly impact Medicaid - a key concern he cited with the first version.

"My goal is to create a more workable system that lowers the cost of coverage, provides access to quality care, and protects the most vulnerable in our society," he said in a statement. "I'll review the text of this new legislation just like I did the last version, and I will review the analysis from the Congressional Budget Office when it becomes available.

"I opposed the last draft of the Senate health proposal because I had concerns about the measure's Medicaid policies, especially those that impact drug treatment for those suffering from addiction," he added. "I've also consistently said that the Affordable Care Act isn't working for many Ohio families and small businesses whose premiums and deductibles have skyrocketed, and choices have disappeared as health insurance plans have left Ohio. As this process moves forward, I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that our health care system works better for all Ohioans."

Senate Republicans can only afford to lose the support of two of their members before a key procedural vote next week, and GOP Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky and Susan Collins of Maine have indicated they will not support the bill.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Cleveland) reiterated his opposition to the measure, which is intended to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act.

In a statement, he said he had met with families whose children had diseases or disabilities and other Ohioans who would be affected by the legislation.

"How can a bunch of Washington politicians with taxpayer-funded healthcare look these people in the eye and tell them 'we're going to let insurance companies refuse to cover your child's care'? How can they say 'we're gutting the best tool we have to combat the opioid crisis'? How can they raise costs on hard-working people just because they turn 50?" he said. "I'm ready to work with Republicans to lower costs and make healthcare work better, but that's not what this bill does."

The latest version of the bill includes provisions that would provide \$70 billion more to states in encouraging state-based reforms through cost sharing, health savings accounts and other changes. The original bill included \$112 billion for these purposes. (Summary)

It also adds \$45 billion more targeting the opiate crisis.

The BCRA would also allow people to pay insurance premiums with health savings accounts.

Another provision would let health insurers sell less expensive, bare-bones plans off the health insurance exchange that lack some of the requirements of plans under the ACA if they also sell plans that meet the requirements.

Ohio groups have voiced concerns with the plan, particularly deep cuts to Medicaid and the phase-out of the expansion created under the ACA.

The Ohio Association of County Boards of DD said in a statement that the bill would result in shrinking funding for Ohio's Medicaid program, meaning decreased access to developmental disabilities services.

"OACB is concerned that such circumstances could result in costs being shifted to counties, and service reductions could follow as some counties could be forced to either reevaluate their service offerings or request additional funding from local taxpayers to make up the difference," the group said.

The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers has criticized the bill, saying its effects on Medicaid expansion and essential health benefits would jeopardize the state's efforts in fighting the opiate crisis.

Voices for Ohio's Children criticized the bill for continuing the extensive cuts to Medicaid.

"The bill would also impact Ohio's economy. Medicaid cuts leave Ohio with terrible choices like cutting coverage for kids, seniors and people with disabilities; reducing payments to the doctors who care for them, and rolling back benefits like doctor-recommended screenings for kids," the group said in a statement. "Medicaid cuts shift the risk to the state, blowing a hole in our budget and threatening other priorities like addressing the opiate crisis-which could lead to higher taxes."

"The time-limited emergency funds proposed by the Senate do not hold the same value as sustained health insurance coverage - not now and not once those emergency funds are expended," Lori Criss, the group's CEO, said in a statement this week. "Broken bones, chronic pain, traumatic brain injury, dental problems, diabetes, breathing conditions, heart disease, liver conditions, and infectious diseases such as Hepatitis C: these are all treatable physical health conditions that people recovering from addiction and mental illness need to access care for."

Institutions Grapple With Budget's Tuition Freeze, Flat State Funding

Ohio's colleges and universities are figuring out how they'll navigate this year with flat funding from the state and a prohibition on across-the-board tuition increases.

The biennial budget (HB 49) holds State Share of Instruction funding at previous levels and continues a tuition freeze that's been in place since 2015. In past budget cycles, a ban on raising tuition has been accompanied by an increase in state funding.

Higher education leaders said the unprecedented move has them concerned about maintaining the quality of their institutions and the ability to meet a state-imposed attainment goal that seeks to increase the number of Ohioans holding post-secondary degrees to 65% by 2020.

"Some of our institutions don't want to raise tuition, but some of them need to in order to maintain quality programming," Inter-University Council of Ohio President Bruce Johnson said in a recent interview.

He said he's disappointed the Conference Committee's report didn't maintain the Senate's permission for four-year institutions to increase tuition by \$10 per credit hour this year and by the consumer price index or 2%, whichever is less, next year.

Although the state's tuition still ranks among the highest in the country, increases have been few and far between in recent years as the administration and legislature have made significant pushes to hold down student costs.

Tuition in Ohio "has been increasing slower than the rate of inflation for a decade now, so this hyper concern about the spiraling costs is just a fabrication," Mr. Johnson said.

He said he shares the legislature's desire to increase access to higher education, however, its plans could backfire. He worries those institutions in other states that receive more state funding or can raise tuition are likely to lure Ohio students away with improved offerings and supports.

"Tuition is less expensive today than it was 10 years ago on an inflation-adjusted basis, but I don't think we're maintaining the quality," he said. "Students and their families care about quality."

Likewise, community colleges are debating how to increase resources to help students build career pathways and stay on track to graduate without the \$10-per-credit-hour tuition increase that would have been dedicated to the cause this year under the legislature's version of the budget.

The governor vetoed the community college tuition increase for this year, but maintained legislative budget language that permits them to increase tuition by \$10 per credit hour in 2018.

"The presidents and boards of trustees are currently evaluating which options make the most sense to meet the competing challenges facing their institutions: balancing the need to implement reforms that improve student success while dealing with the realities of providing an affordable, quality education in a restrained fiscal environment," said Tom Walsh, vice president of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges.

"We will continue to discuss with the chancellor to determine how the institutions can best tackle these challenges with a focus of helping our students move more quickly into Ohio's workforce," he added.

There was some debate about whether eliminating this year's tuition language meant community colleges weren't subject to the continued freeze like universities, but Mr. Walsh said the chancellor has made it clear that the administration's intent was to hold down costs this year and it will be honored.

In his veto message, Gov. John Kasich said allowing community colleges to increase instructional or general fees this year would "undermine" efforts to keep students' costs low.

"The administration and the General Assembly have gone to great lengths to help Ohio's public colleges and universities implement innovative strategies to control their costs, and continuing these efforts is essential to maintaining access to college," he wrote. "Limiting the ability of state institutions of higher education to increase costs best aligns with Ohio's ongoing effort to increase access to higher education, improve career opportunities for Ohioans and make Ohio's workforce more desirable to job creators around the world."

However, Mr. Walsh said community colleges are already more affordable than their four-year counterparts and any additional funding, which will come in the second year of the biennium through the allowed tuition increases, will be used to implement early engagement strategies, expand advising opportunities, and deploy new hardware and software to better track student outcomes.

"We do not have an affordability problem. Rather, our challenge is to improve student success," Mr. Walsh said.

In addition to maintaining current tuition rates, the budget also expressly freezes certain fees and authorizes the chancellor to investigate all fees and determine whether they are in the best interest of students.

If the chancellor determines some fees aren't benefiting students, he can prohibit the institution from implementing them. Institutions can seek to overturn his determination through the Controlling Board.

To circumvent the simultaneous freezes and flat funding, some universities are looking to create tuition guarantee programs, which are currently in place at Miami University and Ohio University.

State law permits institutions to increase tuition by 6% for the first incoming freshman classes so long as tuition and fees remain the same for that cohort over four years. For subsequent freshman classes in the programs, universities can raise tuition by the rate of inflation.

A budget provision vetoed by Gov. Kasich would have raised the initial allowed increase to 8%.

Mr. Johnson said he expects more schools to consider creating guarantee programs because the biennial budget doesn't provide them with any other ways to raise funds.

"I think more schools are going to look at it," he said. "Students like it because they like the assurance that tuition and fees aren't going up over the years."

Ohio State University is the first to take steps to implement a guarantee as a result of the latest freeze. Its board of trustees this week voted to submit for the chancellor's approval of a plan to create a program that would increase tuition by 5.5% for this year's incoming freshman class.

Dissolved School Facilities Commission's Work Will Live On Through Partner Agency, Members Say

The School Facilities Construction Commission held its final meeting Thursday, but members said there will be no change in the state's commitment to assisting school districts with their construction projects.

The biennial budget (HB 49) eliminated the panel and transferred its responsibilities to the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission, which guides capital construction projects for state agencies and higher education institutions.

During the OSFC's 20 years, it has operated alongside OFCC, employing the same staff and working out of the same offices. Chairman and Office of Budget and Management Director Tim Keen said that "commission within a commission structure created some confusion" at times.

"For that and other reasons, I think it made sense for us to go ahead and advance this proposal, which the legislature approved," Mr. Keen said.

"The school facilities program will carry on presumably for another 20 years and beyond, just within an organization named something different that was mostly the same people doing mostly the same thing," he added.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria served on OSFC, but his membership does not carry over to OFCC, to which the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction director is appointed instead.

However, the superintendent said he and the Department of Education will continue to assist and support the commission in any way possible.

"The work that happens here is such a critical contributor to creating those school climate conditions that provide for an engaging environment, a conducive environment to student learning," Mr. DeMaria said. "I continue to be ready to support the great work to come."

Over the last two decades, OSFC disbursed \$11.5 billion for 1,143 school projects, said David Williamson, executive director of the eliminated commission as well as OFCC.

The director highlighted other budget provisions impacting OFCC, including those that create the 1:1 School Facilities Option program, as well as modify commission membership, reporting requirements and eligibility for districts under fiscal watch, fiscal emergency and academic distress. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, July 6, 2017)

The budget also allows OFCC to disbar individuals in addition to contracting firms, and permits districts to take on unvoted debt if they can prove alternative fuel vehicle projects will pay for themselves over the course of 15 years.

Another provision appropriates more than \$7 million for community school facilities - a move Mr. Keen said may have been unintentional.

It's likely the legislature was attempting to reappropriate unspent community school facilities assistance money, but actually created new spending authority, he said. Mr. Keen said OBM lobbied against the provision's inclusion in the Conference Committee's report.

In other business, the board voted to approve \$268.5 million for five Construction Facilities Assistance Program projects. It also accepted a handful of renewals, plan amendments and settlement agreements.

Members voted to table a Berea City Schools project agreement modification. Mr. Keen said he may call a special meeting to take up the issue before OFCC's next planned meeting in October.

NOAA Forecast Calls For 'Significant' Harmful Algal Blooms In Lake Erie

Analysts on Thursday predicted "significant harmful algal bloom" activity for Lake Erie this summer with projections on pace to equal blooms seen in 2013 and 2014.

But the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its partners, addressing media Thursday in Toledo, said bloom activity is not expected to surpass 2015's record-setting levels.

Researchers placed 2017's bloom at a 7.5 on the severity index, but said activity could range anywhere between 6.5 and 9. For reference, 2011 and 2015 had the highest activity on record at 10 and 10.5 respectively.

"A bloom of this size is evidence that the research and outreach efforts currently underway to reduce nutrient loading, optimize water treatment, and understand bloom dynamics need to continue," said Christopher Winslow, director of the Ohio Sea Grant College Program.

"Despite the predicted size of this year's bloom, much of the lake will be algae free throughout the bloom season and the lake remains a key asset for the state," he added.

Environmental groups sounded the alarm over the forecast, calling the bloom outlook "severe."

"With a bloom of this size and scale expected, it is clear that this problem can only be addressed at the source," said Nicholas Mandros, regional coordinator with the Ohio Environmental Council. "Toxic algae is primarily caused by agricultural runoff, and Ohio's voluntary approach simply isn't enough to curb the algae-causing pollution flowing into Lake Erie."

Larry Antosch, a senior director with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, agreed phosphorous reduction is paramount to the long-term health of the lake. The possibility of a reoccurrence of the algae-fueled 2014 Toledo water crisis, which left 400,000 residents without drinking water, is of lingering concern, he said.

"We still have a problem in Lake Erie," Mr. Antosch said. "What we can't do is get complacent just because we haven't had another Toledo crisis with drinking water. There is some thought the bloom this year going to be one of the larger blooms because we had a lot of rain in the spring and early summer."

The NOAA has already issued several early season projections, hinting at a more severe season than last year's. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, July 5, 2017) But Thursday's seasonal forecast is the agency's formal prediction and the most accurate look at this point of the severity of bloom activity that will likely begin in earnest later this month.

Although the forecast calls for a "larger than normal" bloom, researchers specified that the size of a bloom doesn't necessarily equate to its level of toxicity. NOAA is currently working to create tools to predict toxicity, the agency said.

"The Lake Erie harmful algal bloom forecast is another example of NOAA's ongoing efforts to provide science-based information to water managers and public health officials as they make decisions to protect their communities," said Russell Callender, assistant NOAA administrator for the National Ocean Service. "We will continue to work with our partners to bring the most accurate data and tools to future forecasts for the region."

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Cleveland) said in a statement that in light of the forecast "we need every tool at our disposal to protect the health of Lake Erie." That includes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which House lawmakers are currently proposing to fully fund in the budget against the recommendation of President Donald Trump. (See Gongwer Ohio Report, July 12, 2017)

"The millions of Ohioans who rely on the Lake can't afford to lose important resources like the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative as they face the threat of algal blooms," Sen. Brown said. "My Ohio colleagues and I will continue our bipartisan efforts to secure the necessary investment to keep Lake Erie safe."

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-Terrace Park) echoed that sentiment in a statement while touting his recent legislation to provide NOAA with additional resources.

"NOAA's forecasting is critically important to help prepare for and mitigate the impacts of harmful algal blooms (HABs) in Lake Erie," he said. "Although great progress has been made to reduce HABs in the Great Lakes, NOAA's prediction of significant HABs this summer highlights the need to ensure programs like the Great Lake Restoration Initiative are fully funded so that we can continue to protect the Great Lakes."

Farming Advocates Regroup After CAUV Budget Victory

Farmer advocacy groups will have much more time to devote to the rest of their agendas now that the budget's fix to Current Agricultural Use Value tax system has been signed into law.

For three years, groups like the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and the Ohio Farmers Union have devoted the bulk of their lobbying efforts to pushing for a revamp of the CAUV system. In recent years CAUV taxes on farmers have jumped, in some cases as much as 300%.

Although sympathetic to the farmers' plight, lawmakers haven't taken comprehensive action on overhauling the system until this year. The budget's changes are to be phased in over two reassessment cycles to ease revenue loss for schools and local governments - which the comparison document places at about \$4 million less for tax year 2017 and up to \$14 million less by 2022.

Among the budget's changes are requiring the formula to employ a capitalization rate, and that the equity yield rate in that capitalization rate formula is equal to the greater of the 25-year average of the total rate of return on farm equity published by the federal government. A 25-year holding period for calculating equity build-up and land value appreciation would also be employed.

The groups estimate the change will result in average savings of 30% for farmers' 2017 assessments.

"We're very thankful to the administration and the legislature for that," said OFU spokesman Ron Sylvester in an interview. "It took a while, but we're happy."

Jenna Beadle, director of state policy for the OFBF, said the fix resolves any lingering concerns the group had with CAUV. The key now is to educate stakeholders about the transition and other components of the bill such as a provision that is aimed at incentivizing farmers to place land in conservation, she said.

"We're going to be spending a lot of time trying to help farmers and local officials understand how everything works," Ms. Beadle said. "We do serve on the Ag advisory committee so we'll continue to be engaged that way with the tax department and other stakeholders."

When lawmakers enacting what farmers believe will be a fairer system they essentially removed removes a major priority from the plates of both groups.

For the OFU, that means their attention will now turn to the federal level where the group is hoping ward off what it believes is a pending crisis for small farmers. Mr. Sylvester said the group is seeing some of the same harbingers that predated the 1980's farming crisis which saw collapsing prices and skyrocketing interest rates.

"We're concerned about the viability of family farming and dairy operations," Mr. Sylvester said. "And we're very concerned about the Trump administration's moves to do some reorganization at the USDA."

Mr. Trump's budget proposal recommended cutting Farm Bill programs by \$231 billion. Overall, the president called for a 21% budget cut to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Programs pertaining to crop insurance, conservation efforts, and agricultural research are all among those on the chopping block.

"If these things get cut, it's a real hit to rural America," Mr. Sylvester said. "It's really surprising given rural America had so much to do with President Trump winning office. We would expect both (Ohio's) senators would be supporting us in these efforts."

Ms. Beadle said the OFBF will be able to spend more time seeing to its other state priorities, such as water quality, the business climate and protecting property rights.

"I don't think we have any specific individual legislative priorities," she said. "We do have a list of priority issues we'll continue to work on through the rest of the year and things may come up that need addressed."

New Member Profile: Brown Hopes To Tackle Education Funding

The state's newest lawmaker currently has no committee assignments, but he does have his eyes on a handful of issues he intends to make his focus in the Statehouse.

Rep. Richard Brown, 61, said he hopes to tackle education funding, insurance and veterans' issues.

The Canal Winchester Democrat, who was seated late last month, grew up in Ironton. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati before earning a law degree from Ohio State University.



Richard Brown

Rep. Brown has been practicing law for more than 35 years, including the past seven years at his own firm.

But it was an unsuccessful bid to unseat Tenth District Court of Appeals Judge Lisa Sadler in 2008 that took Rep. Brown in a more political direction.

"It kind of changed the focus of my practice," he said.

After years representing insurance companies and big businesses, Rep. Brown decided he wanted to focus more on small businesses and individuals.

When former Rep. Heather Bischoff left the General Assembly, he said he found an opening to do so to an even greater degree.

"I'd always wanted to give back to the public and my community," he said.

Although he has yet to be assigned to any committees, given his background Rep. Brown believes he would be an asset on the Insurance Committee.

"I know a lot of the issues involved from both sides of the legal fence," he said.

Rep. Brown's father, grandfather and oldest son have served in the military and he also hopes to be tapped for the Armed Services, Veterans Affairs & Homeland Security Committee.

No matter his committee assignments, Rep. Brown plans to work on education funding issues. Citing the DeRolph Ohio Supreme Court decision that found the state's school financing system unconstitutional, he said there needs to be more equitable funding.

"That's something that legislators long before me have tried to solve and have not been successful," he said.

Beyond those issues, Rep. Brown also said he will work hard to be open with and available to constituents and to build relationships across the aisle that will allow him to work in a bipartisan fashion.

As for jumping into the General Assembly at the end of budget season, Rep. Brown called it "a little breathtaking."

Rep. Brown and his wife of 25 years have three children and four grandchildren.

The American history major is also an aficionado of President John F. Kennedy, who he said would be considered a moderate to conservative Democrat today.

"I have a lot of the same notions and ideas about stuff," he said.

Supplemental Agency Calendar

Thursday, July 20

Cemetery Dispute Resolution Commission, 22nd Fl., 77 S. High St., Columbus, 10 a.m.

17 S. High St., Suite 630

Columbus Ohio 43215

Phone: 614-221-1992 | Fax: 614-221-7844 | Email: gongwer@gongwer-oh.com

Scott Miller, President | Kent Cahlander, Editor | Melissa Dilley, Mike Livingston, Dustin Ensinger, Jon Reed, Staff Writers

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THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

Contact: Lisa Gates, Vice President of Comms
(614) 224-3255 or Lisa@BuckeyeInstitute.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 21, 2017

Buckeye Economist Orphe Divounguy: Ohio Created More Jobs than Expected in June

Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute's lead economist **Orphe Divounguy, Ph.D.**, commented on newly released unemployment data from the **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**.

"Last month, the civilian labor force fell slightly (-0.1%) despite a small increase in the working-age population. However, in a positive sign, Ohio created more jobs than expected (0.2%), with non-agricultural wage and salary employment increasing 11,500 over the month, and employment in goods-producing industries standing at 909,500, an increase of 4,700 over the month.

"A declining labor force, coupled with positive job growth, indicates that while some unemployed workers are finding jobs, others are leaving the labor force. One reason could be, the newly unemployed, those who had just returned to the labor force, lacked the skills employers look for and exited the market place.

"It is also likely that the job growth reflects a larger number of employed workers moving on to better jobs. This would be a positive sign, since the increase in job transitions should result in stronger wage growth.

"While job growth in 2017 has slowed, Ohio is not unique, as the state's employment picture is consistent with the rest of the US economy."

#

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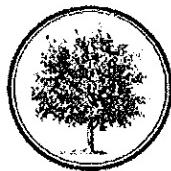
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July 26, 2017

Buckeye Economist Orphe Divounguy: Although Still Growing, Ohio's Economy has Cooled Down

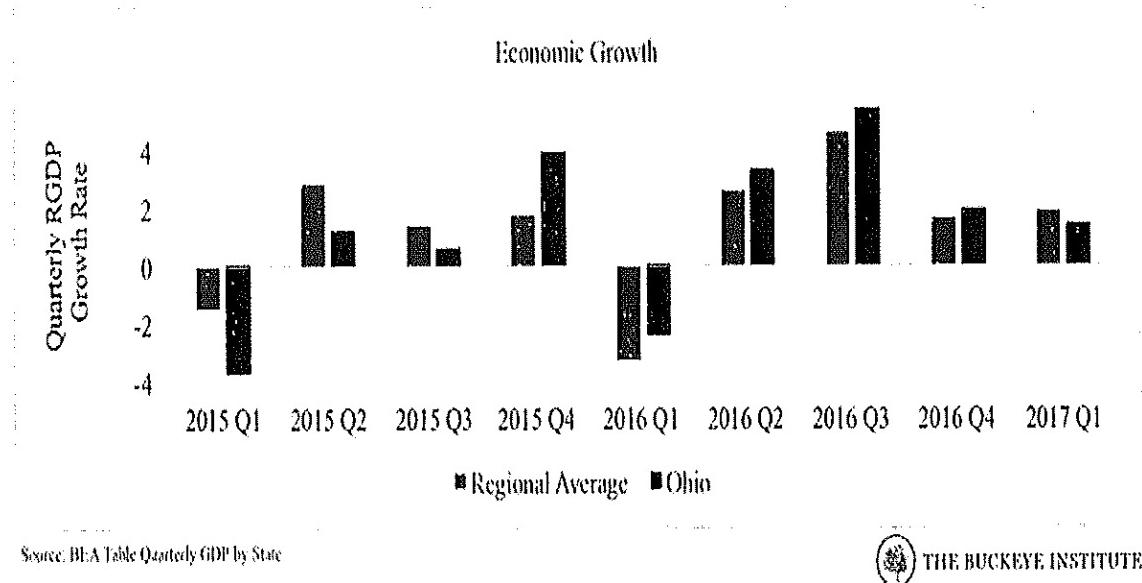
Columbus, OH - The Buckeye Institute's lead economist **Orphe Divounguy, Ph.D.**, commented on newly released data from the **Bureau of Economic Analysis**, that showed Ohio's economy grew by 1.4 percent in the first quarter of 2017, compared to 1.9 percent for the rest of the region.

"Despite outperforming its neighbor states for the previous five quarters, Ohio's economy seems to be cooling down. In light of the recent Ohio budget debate, reversing the Administration's income tax cuts would have been detrimental to the state's economy. This is because income tax cuts lift households' disposable incomes, freeing up resources for higher

investment and job creation. Fortunately, both Ohio Governor John Kasich, and the General Assembly have remained committed to reducing the tax burden on Ohio families and businesses.

"While Ohio had begun to adopt strong pro-growth tax policies, more must be done to ensure economic prosperity. Reforming the state's labor policies, such as reducing the burden of occupational licensing on Ohio workers, will make the state more competitive, grow the labor force, and help keep Ohio ahead of the pack.

"Economic growth cannot return to its golden age as long as Ohio has tax rates and a regulatory framework that penalize job creation and cause people to leave the state as a result of fewer economic opportunities. It is past time to walk back burdensome regulations that increase hiring costs as well as policies, such as occupational licensing requirements, that block Ohioans from getting good paying jobs. Ohio needs policies that will stimulate capital investment and boost economic activity."



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THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

Finally, Ohio to Review Tax Loopholes

By **Greg R. Lawson**
July 28, 2017

It's about time! Ohio is finally getting prepared to do a deep dive and **review** the state's voluminous list of tax loopholes. It is about time. The Buckeye Institute has long been a leader in calling for exactly this type of review so that loopholes are closed and any revenue generated be used for the kind of simple, fair and pro-growth tax reform that is needed to improve Ohio's economy and grow jobs.

As far back as 2011, The Buckeye Institute **joined with think tanks** from across the ideological spectrum to call for a detailed review of Ohio tax loopholes. Along with the **Greater Ohio Policy Center** and the **Center for Community Solutions**, The Buckeye Institute called for a comprehensive review that consisted of a cost benefit analysis of these loopholes as outlined by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) in their **Tax Expenditure Report**. Further, the three groups prepared a **list of 20 loopholes** that should have been eliminated, which, at the time, resulted in \$300 million of lost revenue.